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Visualising Food as a Modern Medicine:

Gender, the Body and Health Education in Britain, 1940-1992

by

Jane Hand

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in History

University of Warwick

Department of History

Centre for the History of Medicine

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Dedicated to Nora O'Connor (1915-1999), with love

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Declaration of Work Included in Online Blog

Elements of my argument from Chapter One has been included in the blog https://eatingforhealthuhcw.wordpress.com/ based on an exhibition I organised in conjunction with University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire, March – October 2014.

Abstract

This thesis investigates the role and function of visual images produced by both central government and Unilever P.L.C. from 1940 to c.1992 in constructing knowledge about diet, disease and the body. It examines historical instances of the use of visual images – posters, leaflets, magazine advertisements, product advertisements and documentary film and television – in promoting healthy eating as a tool of disease prevention. I historicise these images as important 'vehicles of communication', reclaiming their importance in understanding the historical development of disease risk as it related to food in wartime and postwar Britain. I have limited the project to analyses of central government health education campaigns centred on food and the advertising output of one multinational food company, Unilever. This selectivity allows for the promotion of the food industry within historical understandings of health education in the twentieth century. Through the analytic lens of visual representation this thesis explores the complexities of understanding disease risk in relation to lifestyle and behaviour choice. Therefore, this thesis contributes to the literature on the historicising of disease, while providing a working model for analysing images as important agents of information provision. I explore and decode visual representations, sensitive to the complex ways meanings are produced, circulated and understood in specific socio-cultural contexts. As a collective these images do not conform to a visual 'look', but they do perform important functions beyond their intended use. They repeatedly reference gender norms, the primacy of the body and the enduring focus on modernity and the 'modern' in 'selling' health and new lifestyles. While such images construct food, gender and the body in different ways, this thesis suggests that collectively they represent food as a modern medicine.

List of Abbreviations

BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
CCHE	Central Council for Health Education
COI	Central Office of Information
DHSS	Department of Health and Social Security
GPO	General Post Office
HEA	Health Education Authority
HEC	Health Education Council
ITV	Independent Television
MAFF	Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food
MISS	Milk in Schools Scheme
MoF	Ministry of Food
MoH	Ministry of Health
MOI	Ministry of Information
MOsH	Medical Officers of Health
NHS	National Health Service

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Introduction

Envisioning Diet, Disease and the Healthy Body

Figure i.1: Turn over a new leaf: Eat Vegetables daily to enjoy good health' Poster, (James Fitton, Ministry of Food), c. 1940-45

The history of medicine has long concerned itself with the rise and fall of disease, the development of national health care systems, the significance of public health and the later expansion in community medicine.[1] Yet, most of these histories have tended to either overlook or only study tangentially the function of visual images in creating knowledge around disease, health and medicine at population level.[2] Within social history more generally there has been a slow re-orientation toward the use of images as productive sources in analysing the past.[3] Art History has similarly only recently

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[1] For example see: Charles Rosenberg, *The Cholera Years: The United States in 1832, 1844, and 1866* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987); Judith Walzer Leavitt, *Typhoid Mary: Captive to the Public's Health*, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1996); Anne Hardy, *The Epidemic Streets: Infectious Disease and the Rise of Preventive Medicine, 1856-1900* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993); Linda Bryder, *Below the Magic Mountain: A Social History of Tuberculosis in Twentieth Century Britain* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1988); Anne Hardy, 'Smallpox in London: factors in the decline of the disease in the nineteenth century, *Medical History* 27 (1983), pp. 111-138; Charles Webster, *The Health Services since the War, Vol. I, Problems of Health Care: The National Health Service before 1957* (London: HMSO, 1988); Webster, *The Health Services since the War, Vol. II, Government and Health Care: The National Health Services since the War 1958-1979* (London: HMSO, 1996); Anthony S. Wohl, *Endangered Lives: Public Health in Victorian Britain* (London: Methuen, 1984); Virginia Berridge, D.A. Christie and E. Tansey, *Public Health in the 1980s and 1990s: Decline and Rise?* (London: Wellcome Trust, 2006); Virginia Berridge, *Marketing Health: Smoking and the Discourse of Public Health in Britain, 1945-2000* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007); John Welshman, 'The Medical Officer of Health in England and Wales, 1900–1974: Watchdog or Lapdog?', *Journal of Public Health Medicine* 19 (1997), pp. 443–50; Welshman, 'Rhetoric and Reality: Community Care in England and Wales 1948–1974', in *Outside the Walls of the Asylum: The History of Care in the Community*, ed. by Peter Bartlett and David Wright (London: Athlone Press, 1999), pp. 204–26.

[2] Notable exceptions since the 1980s include: Sander Gilman *Disease and Representation: Images of Illness from Madness to AIDS* (Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1988); Sander Gilman, *Picturing Health and Illness: Images of Identity and Difference* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1995); Gilman, *Seeing the Insane* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1982); Roger Cooter and Claudia Stein, 'Coming into Focus: Posters, power, and visual culture in the history of medicine' *Medizinhistorisches* 42 (2007), pp. 180-209; Cooter and Stein, 'Visual Objects and Universal Meanings: AIDS Posters and the Politics of Globalisation and History', *Medical History* 55 (2011), pp. 85-108; Ludmilla Jordanova, *Sexual Visions: Image of gender in science and medicine between the eighteenth and twentieth centuries* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989); Ludmilla Jordanova, 'Medicine and Visual Culture' *Social History of Medicine* 3:1 (1990), pp. 89-99; Gillian Rose, *Visual Methodologies: An Introduction to Researching with Visual Images* (London: Sage, 2001); Lisa Cartwright, *Screening the Body: Tracing Medicine's Visual Culture* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995); Martin Gorsky, Krzysztof Krajewski-Siuda, Wojciech Dutka and Virginia Berridge, 'Anti Alcohol posters in Poland, 1945-1989: Diverse Meanings, Uncertain Effects, *American Journal of Public Health: Public Health Then and Now* 100:11 (2010), pp. 2059-2069; Harriet Palfreyman, 'Visualising Venereal Disease in London c.1780-1860' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Warwick, 2012); Marianne Fedunkiw 'Malaria Films: Motion Pictures as Public Health Tools', *American Journal of Public Health: Public Health Then and Now* 93:7 (2003), pp. 1046-1057; David Serlin, *Imagining Illness: Public Health and Visual Culture* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010); Ondine Godschalk, 'A Picture of Health? New Zealand-made Health Education Films 1952-1962', *Social History of Medicine* 25:1 (2012), pp. 122-138.

[3] Some important works in this regard are: Tania Woloshyn, 'La Pays du Soleil: The Art of Heliotherapy on the Côte d'Azur', *Social History of Medicine* 26:1 (2013), pp. 74-93; Suzannah Biernoff, 'The Rhetoric of Disfigurement in First World War Britain', *Social History of Medicine* 24:3

approached a wider canon of images, which has informed and shaped my own approach to interpreting how visual images construct meaning.[4] This thesis argues that images played important, and often overlooked scholarly roles in constructing a link between diet, disease and the healthy body in the period from the Second World War until the early 1990s when diet education became increasingly text-based with supportive illustrations, rather than mainly visual, supported by text.[5] My work explores the connections between visual images, consumption, gender and food in the exceptional period of food rationing during the 1940s and early 1950s before extending this discussion to the postwar rise of chronic heart disease. Using chronic heart disease to trace the connections between diet and disease during the 1970s and 1980s, I examine both governmental and commercial efforts to visualise (and market) healthiness through the body. Infectious disease conditions and the need to prevent any widespread rise in deficiency diseases were the main concerns for the wartime

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(2011), pp. 666-685; Frances Bernstein, 'Envisioning Health in Revolutionary Russia: The Politics of Gender in Sexual Enlightenment Posters of the 1920s', *Russian Review* 57:2 (1998), pp. 191-217; Chole Ward, '"Something of the Spirit of Stalingrad": British Women, their Soviet sisters, propaganda and politics in the Second World War', *Twentieth Century British History* 25:3 (2014), pp. 435-460; Sarah Street, 'Cinema, Colour and the Festival of Britain, 1951', *Visual Culture in Britain* 13:1 (2012), pp. 83-91; Peter Jones, 'Posting the Future: British Stamp Design and the 'White Heat' of a Technological Revolution', *Journal of Design History* 17:2 (2004), pp. 163-176; Stephen Constantine, *Buy and Build: The Advertising Posters of the Empire Marketing Board* (London: HMSO, 1986).

[4] In particular: Jim Aulich 'Stealing the Thunder: The Soviet Union and Graphic Design on the Home Front during the Second World War', *Visual Culture in Britain* 13:3 (2012), pp. 346-266; Aulich, *The War Poster: Weapons of Mass Communication* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2007); Jonathan Black, 'For the People's Good: Hans Schleger (1898-1976), Poster Design and British National Identity, 1935-1960, *Visual Culture in Britain* 13:2 (2012) pp. 169-190; Yasuko Suga, 'Modernism, Commercialism and Display Design in Britain: The Reimann School and Studio of Industrial and Commercial Art', *Journal of Design History* 19:2 (2006), pp. 137-154; David Bownes and Oliver Green, *London Transport Posters: A Century of Art and Design* (Aldershot: Lund Humphries, 2008); Dawn Ades, *The Twentieth Century Poster: Design of the Avant-Garde* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1984); Catherine Flood, *British Posters: Advertising, Art and Activism* (London V&A Publishing, 2012).

[5] The committed shift to health promotion (combining education with health interventions and addressing health inequalities), influenced by the Canadian Lalonde Report (1974) and as enshrined in the *Health of the Nation* White Paper (1991), emphasised 'education' but this involved the production of far more text-heavy education materials at the expense of the visual. When images were used they tended to be far more 'cartoonish' and supportive to the text. This trend away from the visual and towards text-based education (excluding, of course, the major increase in the use of television for disseminating the health education message) has continued. For example, 'Change 4 Life', the current NHS education programme based on 'better health', uses brightly coloured gender-neutral figures and objects as symbols and relies greatly on explanatory text and avoids showing the realistic male or female body to convey risk.

government. But the rapid alterations in the postwar food environment, typified by unparalleled food choice from the late 1950s, and the rise of convenient shopping models, had a major impact on public health and the role of health education in disease prevention.[6] The policy of austerity during the war compelled the government to provide practical information to citizens on cooking and growing food in a time of severe shortage. This direct engagement with the national diet became increasingly tied to disseminating the possible causes of certain chronic diseases during the postwar era.

After the war consumer culture played an important part in imagining and visualising an idealised and 'modern' Britain and was closely linked to the rise of stylised images of the body as a marketing tool.[7] In doing so, it created a discourse around health, inferring that the body could operate as a vehicle of self-expression and pleasure. These modes of imagining were themselves firmly located within the spheres of mass media and commercial advertising. Such visualisations helped to strengthen the visual construction of human bodies as agents of economic and social change. This thesis traces the uses of wartime and postwar images of food and diet to argue for the importance of the visual in creating an aestheticisation of lifestyle and the body. Moreover, an emphasis on consumption reveals the importance of gender to

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[6] Further important recent research within public health history has provided varied discussions of the development of national health education campaigns pertaining to chronic disease and which provide important historical and contextual grounding for my work on the visual. These include: Elizabeth Toon, '"Cancer as the General Population Knows It": Knowledge, Fear and Lay Education in 1950s Britain', *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 81:1 (2007), pp. 116-130; Ornella Moscucci, 'The British Fight against Cancer: Publicity and Education, 1900-1948, *Social History of Medicine* 23:2 (2009), pp. 356-373; David Cantor, 'Introduction: Cancer Control and Prevention in the Twentieth Century', Bulletin of the History of Medicine 81:1 (2007), p. 1-38 and Virginia Berridge and Kelly Loughlin, 'Smoking and the New Health Education in Britain 1950s-1970s', *American Journal of Public Health: Public Health Then and Now* 95-6 (2005), pp. 956-964.

[7] See: Mike Featherstone, 'The Body in Consumer Culture', *Theory, Culture and Society* 1 (1982), pp. 18-33; Sander Gilman, *Making the Body Beautiful: A Cultural History of Aesthetic Surgery* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999); Jonathan E. Shroeder, 'Brand Culture: Trade Marks, Marketing and Consumption', in *Trade Marks and Brands: An Interdisciplinary Critique*, ed. by Jane Ginsburg, Lionel Bently and Jennifer Davis (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), pp. 161-176.

this story, demarcating the different social roles, attitudes and behaviours that proved remarkably resilient thematic depictions throughout this period.

As so aptly encapsulated in this governmental poster (Figure 1) produced during the Second World War, the need to 'turn over a new leaf' in terms of personal food consumption has been a visible and persistent public health trope since the 1940s in Britain. This dissertation takes as its starting point Susan Sontag's supposition that:

> the poster, as distinct from the public notice, presupposes the modern concept of the public – in which the members of a society are defined primarily as spectators and consumers. A public notice aims to inform or command. A poster aims to seduce, to exhort, to sell, to educate, to convince, to appeal. Whereas a public notice distributes information to interested or alert citizens, a poster reaches out to grab those who might otherwise pass it by. A public notice posted on a wall is passive, requiring that the spectator present himself before it to read what is written. A poster claims attention--at a distance. It is visually aggressive.[8]

This thesis repositions the role of the visual within postwar dietary health education. It focuses on the function of images in disseminating the notion that food can act as a modern medicine in postwar Britain. It is distinctive because it analyses both formalised governmental health education campaigns and the allied role of commercial enterprise. The emergence of widespread sedentary lifestyle patterns during the twentieth century coincided with a proliferation of visual images of beautiful bodies and related concerns about personal fitness, not only in the popular press, but increasingly within the margins of governmental public information material and commercial advertisements.[9] The poster has repeatedly been identified as an important visual form of modernism, responsible for carrying the visual rhetoric of the avant-garde into the cultural mainstream, yet its role as a communicator, a vehicle for disseminating knowledge to the public has only recently been the emphasis of

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[8] Susan Sontag, 'Posters: advertisement, art, political artifact, commodity' in *Looking Closer: Critical Writings on Graphic Design*, ed. by Michael Bierut (New York: Allworth Press, 1999), pp. 196.

[9] Featherstone, 'The Body and Consumer Culture', pp. 18-33.

scholarly examination.[10] While the initial focus within art and design on identifying words and pictures to create specific meanings used abstract forms to formulate universal symbols (closely related to the rise of Russian Constructivism), this later gave way to newer models of mass communication. The Second World War, in particular, had a lasting influence on the content, form and visual aesthetic of many governmental public information posters and was maintained, at least in part, by the centralised commitment to the Ministry of Information (MOI) (1939-1946), later the Central Office of Information (CoI) (1946-2011).[11] The development of a visual language around civic concerns such as health, diet, safety and hygiene, amongst others, was a central component in an on-going governmental commitment to poster design and distribution as a vehicle of mass communication.[12] Thus, while food and diet were one issue among many that were undergoing normative visualisation as part of their national dissemination, a close-analysis of the visual tropes obliquely presented in a variety of ephemera provides new nuanced understandings about national health concerns, infant welfare, gender, and the construction of beauty norms regarding body image.

Historicising Visual Representations

The turn to the visual within history has had important ramifications on the study of not only the production of images and objects, but also the understandings of what it

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[10] For example see: Ades, *The Twentieth Century Poster*; Flood, *British Posters;* Aulich, *War Posters;* Larissa N. Heinrich, *The Afterlife of Images: Translating the Pathological Body between China and the West* (Durham NC: Duke University Press, 2008).

[11] By visual aesthetic I am referring to qualities of design and form that are visible and deal with the nature of beauty and taste. This definition is borrowed largely from art history but has also been influential in film studies and feminist scholarship.

[12] A 'visual language' is system of communication based on visual elements in terms of the perception, comprehension and production of visible signs. It does not necessarily refer to a system of visible coherency or visual similarity across visual objects.

means to see and comprehend a variety of representations. In particular, the history of medicine as a sub-discipline is particularly well visualised.[13] From eighteenth and nineteenth century medical portraits and atlases, to the microscope, X-Ray and ultrasound, the act of viewing has been pivotal to the development of Western medical science.[14] Yet, the complex and multifaceted meanings of visual representation were neither questioned nor historicised by medical historians until the visual turn. This previous tendency to overlook the potential value of images to critical study has undergone a dramatic intellectual reorientation within the humanities and the social sciences since the 1980s. While theories of the image had hitherto focussed on the notion of the image as purely visual – non-verbal and free of narrative, reference and representation – the rise of semiotics and the linguistic turn inverted this reflectionist understanding of the relationship between words and objects.[15] In particular, emerging visual theorists emphasised the importance of 'representation' to the understanding of the function of images within cultural contexts.

However, this was not entirely novel. The processes through which systems of 'representation' were formed have been long debated within literary theory. While such systems were traditionally considered to reflect the world as it is/was, Hegelian notions of culture implied a form of *higher* representation, closely linked to contemporaneous understandings of culture that were undergoing continual

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[13] By the term, 'visualise' or 'visualised' I mean the act of making visible, that is the processes and practices that create images to construct meaning. For the history of medicine more broadly, this includes medical portraiture, images within medical textbooks, health education images, x-ray images and cat-scan images amongst others.

[14] For example see: Cartwright, *Screening the Body*; Palfreyman, 'Visualising Venereal Disease'; Heinrich, *The Afterlife of Images*; Barbara Duden, *The Woman Beneath the Skin: A Doctors Patients in Eighteenth- Century Germany*, trans. Thomas Dunlap (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 1991).

[15] Jessica Evans, 'Introduction', in *Visual Culture: The Reader*, ed. by Jessica Evans and Stuart Hall (London and Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1999), pp. 12-13.

transformation and thus demanding (re)interpretation through a hermeneutic filter.[16] This idealist interpretation of representation, inherently pictorial and inextricably linked to aesthetics, came to have a distinct impact on postwar criticism and critical studies within art history, regardless of whether such criticism was historicist or anti-historicist in approach.[17]

The implications of the linguistic turn for the history of art were therefore significant. From the 1980s, a number of art historians, including Norman Bryson, Michael Ann Holly and Keith Moxey argued that the emergent field of visual culture should reject this simplistic and reductive definition of representation and instead advanced a semiotics of representation.[18] This approach towards establishing a history of images, rather than a history of art, and a parallel movement away from exclusive attention to 'masterpieces' and 'high art', still focused on the study of representation but used theories developed in the humanities and the social sciences to address the complex ways in which meanings are produced, circulated and understood in specific socio-cultural contexts.[19] Thus, images were no longer understood as mere mirrors onto the world, reflecting the 'real' or the 'true', but instead were recognised as representations of socially and culturally contingent values of meaning-making.

Dubbed the 'pictorial turn' by W.J.T Mitchell in the early 1990s, there has been a similar shift among scholars to focus on the study of visual culture across

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[16] David Summers, 'Representation' in *Critical Terms for Art History*, ed. by Robert S. Nelson and Richard Schiff (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1996), pp. 3-19.

[17] E.H Gombrich was a renowned proponent of the anti-historicist rejection of the 'innocent eye' (the assumption that images do not need to be read) in favour of utilising pre-existing visual formulae for interpreting meaning in visual texts. See: Vardan Azatyan, 'Ernst Gombrich's Politics of Art History: Exile, Cold War and *The Story of Art*', *Oxford Art Journal* 33:2 (2010), pp. 127-41.

[18] Norman Bryson, Michael Ann Holly and Keith Moxey, *Visual Culture: Images and Interpretation* (Hanover, NH: Wesleyan University Press, 1994), p. xviii.

[19] Margaret Dikovitskaya, *Visual Culture: The Study of the Visual after the Cultural Turn* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2006), pp. 52-53.

several disciplines.[20] This occurred in part through the wider repercussions of the linguistic and cultural turn that facilitated the expansion of the history of art into a variety of social realms. The introduction of a cultural studies approach to interpretation widened the scope of visual analysis to communication, cinema and television studies, and science studies amongst others.[21] Mitchell asserted that the 'pictorial turn' was a 'postlinguistic, postsemiotic rediscovery of the picture as a complex interplay between visuality, apparatus, institutions, discourse, bodies, and figularity'.[22] He acknowledged that spectatorship could be as problematic as various forms of reading and that 'visual literacy' might not be comprehensible on the model of textuality.[23]

In *Picture Theory*, Mitchell attempted to address the tension between visual and verbal representations while emphasising the importance of visual culture and literacy in its relation to language and literature. Language systems, he argued, were central to the process of meaning-making for images, operating within, and through specific cultural contexts. In the act of interpreting images, language enters the visual field; the boundaries between the visual and verbal remaining porous and facilitating cultural exchange.[24] This simultaneous tension between, and yet reliance on, 'word and image' to understandings of culture ensured that scholars like Bryson, Holly, Moxey and Mitchell interrogated the role of images in culture. This was an analytical shift that had important implications on image interpretation beyond the study of art

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[20] W.J.T Mitchell, *Picture Theory: Essays on Verbal and Visual Representation* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1994), pp. 11-34.

[21] Marita Sturken and Lisa Cartwright, *Practices of Looking: An Introduction to Visual Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 5.

[22] Mitchell, *Picture Theory*, p. 16.

[23] Mitchell, *Picture Theory*, p. 16.

[24] W.J.T. Mitchell, 'Word and Image', in *Cultural Terms for Art History*, ed. by Robert S. Neslon and Richard Schiff (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), pp. 51-60.

history. Indeed, a turn towards the visual was similarly produced across the humanities and social sciences, including both history and the history of medicine.[25]

In the latter field, Sander Gilman and Ludmilla Jordanova have been influential in arguing that cultural history should pay more serious attention to the interpretative possibilities of images.[26] Gilman suggested that 'the visual is intrinsic to the definition of culture' and further argued that 'to ignore them [images] … means to violate the presuppositions of writing 'cultural history' as a history of culture.[27] His influential work on how disease is imagined and how we represent those we label as diseased covered a great variety of diseases and a vast timespan of medical literature, from the ancient Greeks to the representations of AIDS sufferers produced during the 1980s and 1990s. His work engaged with the social construction of representations of race, disease, sexuality, madness and the 'other'. In *Picturing Health and Illness*, he offered a close reading of a number of AIDS posters to deconstruct what Simon Watney termed 'a crisis of representation itself' over the framing of knowledge about the human body and sexuality.[28] Borrowing from literary and art criticism, Gilman decoded AIDS images as aestheticised concealments of the ugly realities of death and dying, arguing that risk is the way in which fears and anxieties about disease are

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[25] In particular, communication studies, the study of the mass media and circuits of mass communication, the study of advertising and consumption and the study of scientific technologies all recognized the potential of studying images and visuality in their particular sub-discipline. For example see: Soraya Chadarevian and Nick Hopwood, *Models: The Third Dimension of Science* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004), Joseph Dumit, *Picturing Personhood: Brain Scans and Biomedical Identity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004); Nick Hopwood, '"Giving Body" to Embryos: Modelling, Mechanism and Microtome in late Nineteenth Century Anatomy', *Isis* 90 (1999), 462-496; Kelly A. Joyce, 'From Numbers to Pictures: The Development of Magnetic Resonance Imaging and the Visual Turn in Medicine', *Science as Culture* 15 (2006), 1-22; Bettyann Holtzmann Kevles, *Naked to the Bone: Medical Imaging in the Twentieth Century* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1997); David Miller, Jenny Kitzinger, Kevin Williams and Peter Beharrell, *The Circuit of Mass Communication* (London: Sage, 1998).

[26] Gilman, *Picturing Health and Illness*; Gilman, *Disease and Representation*; Gilman, *Seeing the Insane*; Jordanova, *Sexual Visions*; Jordanova, 'Medicine and Visual Culture' pp. 89-99.

[27] Gilman, *Picturing Health and Illness*, p. 10.

[28] Simon Watney, *Policing Desire: Pornography, Aids and the Media* (London: Methuen, 1987), p. 9. As cited in Gilman, *Picturing Health and Illness*, p. 115.

contained in modern society.[29] He suggested that images were often created to control the overwhelming nature of disease, suggesting that ‘images can seem to be controlled, while the “illnesses” constructed seem always to be beyond control’.[30] This was particularly apt for AIDS, a disease that evoked deep concern and fears over transmission. Yet, in many ways AIDS was an atypical case. Its associations with homosexuality, morality and its extreme mortality rate ensured that the visualisation processes employed were closely linked to constructing categories that denied dying and employed instead pictorial modes that eroticised the homosexual in attempts to overcome the conventional association with deviancy and disease.[31]

Gilman’s focus on the body at risk is particularly useful for my investigation into visual health campaigns focussed on diet and disease in Britain. The linkage of bodily practices to social norms is a recurring trope throughout the many images analysed in this thesis. By emphasising the visualised body as an agent of homogenisation in this respect, I assert that health education images contributed to the coercive disciplinary power of body norms and ideas, exacerbated by a modern consumer culture that promoted the beautiful body as a dominant social attribute.[32] While Gilman focused on the aestheticisation of the person at risk from AIDS to reveal the normative and exclusionary function of picturing beauty and health, my investigation reveals that analogous visual representations of chronic disease did not have the epistemological power to normalise understandings of diet and disease risk in terms of a ‘beautiful/healthy’ nexus alone. In part, because diet and disease risk focused on chronicity rather than infection, the images I analyse did not utilise the

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[29] Gilman, *Picturing Health and Illness*, p. 159.

[30] Gilman, *Picturing Health and Illness*, p. 32.

[31] Gilman, *Picturing Health and Illness*, p. 119-146.

[32] See also: Featherstone, ‘The Body in Consumer Culture’, pp. 18-33; Susan Bordo, *Unbearable Weight: Feminism, Western Culture and the Body* (Berkeley and London: University of California Press, 1993).

eroticised body as a tool for generating distance between the body at risk and the source of pollution. Instead, these images constructed wider notions of bodily beauty and gender that were not exclusively tied to creating normative understandings of disease in terms of 'Othering' or creating distance between 'illness/ugliness' and the act of dying. Rather, they assimilated into a pre-existing visual vocabulary for discussing the body and disease risk (in part established by wartime food campaigns and later by the anti-smoking campaigns of the 1960s and 1970s) to establish normative social modes of shopping, eating, exercising and desiring – in essence, consuming for health. After all chronic disease aetiology established risk at population level, not at particular societal groups. Thus, adapting perhaps to an increasingly far-reaching consumer culture, visual images centred on diet and disease appropriated a visual vocabulary closely associated with the contemporaneous advertising culture – itself concerned with constructing notions of selling centred on beauty, health and fitness.[33] In this way health images were products of a culturally specific way of seeing. By considering their variability and their instability across culture, this thesis explores the multitudinous meanings attached to the visual representations of diet and disease risk in twentieth century Britain.

Such an approach builds on the work of Ludmilla Jordanova who has argued that images are of analytical value to historians, not as 'cultural ornaments', but as important objects for demonstrating 'that aesthetics is constitutive of knowledge'.[34] Her preference for understanding 'medical and scientific ideas … as mediations' that contained implications beyond their overt content, as a more flexible term, that is free from political or moral judgements and more closely associated with 'ideology' is

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[33] Roberta Sassatelli, *Fitness Culture: Gyms and the Commercialisation of Discipline and Fun* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010). For the pre-First World War and interwar period see: Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska, *Managing the Body: Beauty, Health and Fitness in Britain, 1880-1939* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

[34] Jordanova, *Sexual Visions*, p. 6.

noteworthy.[35] This has allowed her to trace the multiple meanings of axiomatic ideas within cultural traditions.[36] She maintained that 'to do justice to the full complexity and depth of imagery, methods are required that give primacy to the task of drawing out the implications, ramifications and resonances of dense concepts, such as nature and gender, and to the analysis of visual artefacts'.[37] Larissa Heinrich has also asserted that visual culture is pivotal in analysing the 'transmission of ideas about illness across cultures and across history' and in helping to understand the 'cultural and historical conditioning of vision itself'.[38] My approach to analysing images in this thesis similarly emphasises the importance of cultural contexts to understanding and appreciating these images, recognising them as products of socio-culturally contingent modes of viewing that are themselves also time-specific.

Yet such ways of looking within culture, and the possible development of a visual literacy, have been equally contested amongst art historians and visual theorists alike. John Berger, in his influential text *Ways of Seeing*, asserted that '[s]eeing comes before words … and can never be quite covered by them'.[39] But W.J.T Mitchell maintained that developments in art history, film theory and cultural studies all problematised the notion of a purely visual literacy. He argued that by using 'representation as the master-term for this field' within the critique of culture, a set of

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[35] Jordanova, *Sexual Visions*, p. 2.
[36] Jordanova, *Sexual Visions*, p. 2.
[37] Jordanova, *Sexual Visions*, p. 2.
[38] Heinrich, *The Afterlife of Images*, p. 9.
[39] John Berger, *Ways of Seeing* (London: BBC and Penguin Books, 1972), p. 7. Books that seriously analyse the poster are relatively uncommon. Most are devoted to illustration, rather than text and this trend has continued to the present with prologues or epilogues providing generalist summaries of the history of the poster but stopping well-short of any detailed analysis of their social or cultural impact. See: John Barnicoat, *A Concise History of Posters* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1972); Maurice Rickards, *The Rise and Fall of the Poster* (London: David & Charles, 1971); Constantine, *Buy and Build*; David Bownes and Oliver Green, *London Transport Posters: A Century of Art and Design* (Aldershot: Lund Humphries, 2008); Catherine Flood, *British Posters*; Hester Vaizey, *Keep Britain Tidy and Other Posters from the Nanny State* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2014).

linkages between semiotics and aesthetics is activated.[40] He further suggested that it is through the term ‘representation’ that the visual and verbal disciplines would be linked ‘within the field of their differences’, connecting them to concerns about knowledge (true representations), ethics (responsible representations) and power (effective representations).[41] For Gilman, however, this linking between semiotics and aesthetics within health posters in practice is perhaps more self-evident, with images and captions operating to form what he termed a ‘narrative closure’. By doing so he argued, posters omitted ambivalence and contestation in the historical narrative with the image, at least at a superficial level, creating the impression that the historical narrative is complete and comprehensive.[42]

Furthermore, the grouping of image with text can be read as a way of asserting control on how an image is interpreted. For example, the image that opens this thesis, ‘Turn Over a New Leaf’ displayed a variety of colourful, vibrant vegetables set in cartouches against the pink-red ‘wallpapered’ background of the domestic environment. Linking with wider wartime Ministry of Food policy, which encouraged the growing of home grown vegetables in all available cultivatable land, this poster replaced the traditional flower motif of many 1930s and 1940s wallpaper designs with vegetables, and in doing so assigned them a new importance within domestic life.[43] The hanging framed text, set against this wallpaper of homegrown vegetables, ‘Turn Over a New Leaf: Eat Vegetables daily to enjoy good health’ linked the visual component with the public health message. By choosing not to rely on the visual

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[40] Mitchell, *Picture Theory*, p. 6.

[41] Mitchell, *Picture Theory*, p. 6.

[42] Gilman, *Picturing Health and Illness*, p. 16.

[43] The ‘Dig for Victory’ campaign encouraged British citizens to replace flowerbeds with vegetable plots. As the war continued, this was linked more closely to the war effort and many were termed ‘Victory Gardens’. See: Ruth Martin and Terry Marsden, ‘Food for Urban Spaces: The development of urban food production in England and Wales’, *International Planning Studies* 4:3 (1999), pp. 389-412; Juliet Gardiner, *Wartime Britain, 1939-1945* (London: Headline Publishing, 2004).

elements of the poster alone to convey its message, the poster adopted text to clearly communicate its meaning. Thus, while Berger may assert that words can never wholly substitute seeing, it is clear that within the realm of health education, and indeed education campaigns more generally, the need to safeguard the message often superseded the primacy of the visual, resulting in the marriage of the image with the text.

In this way, because the text and the image can often serve different communicative purposes, interpreting images through texts involves moving beyond the notion that the former merely illustrates the latter. Indeed, the common practice by historians of using images as documentary evidence for wider textual arguments has been criticised by Jordanova as a ‘documentary fallacy’. She has identified interdisciplinary approaches as one important way of better understanding the role of images within the history of medicine.[44] It is with this recognition of the value of interdisciplinarity and the application of modes of critical analysis from other spheres of study that I approach an analysis of visual culture within British twentieth century public health. I adopt a broad understanding of ‘public health’ (as preventing disease through the organised and informed efforts of society), arguing that the focus of ‘public health’ on individuals and risk factors can be located both inside and beyond government-funded and sponsored initiatives. I assess how images of health, themselves centred on risk, operated within the ‘public’ sphere (that is as pertaining to or directed at a population), and I identify the commercial production of advertising images by Unilever P.L.C. as one way of achieving this.

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[44] Ludmilla Jordanova, ‘Medicine and Visual Culture’, *Social History of Medicine* 3:1 (1990), pp. 90-91.

Meanings are a product of a complex social interaction between the image, the viewer and the cultural context in which they are produced and consumed.[45] If the principles used to interpret and attach meaning to images are dependent on cultural codes, then the spectator is fundamental to the practice of looking. This thesis asserts that the gaze is an omnipresent force that governs certain looking relations. Adopting an understanding of the gaze, closely associated with Laura Mulvey and her essay 'Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema', I complicate the image convention of women as passive agents and men as active agents in the looking process.[46] By using gender and the body as a linking tool, continuously present within consumer culture during the timespan of my study, it is possible to take into account the important historical conditions of spectatorship. If visual culture is concerned with grounding images within culture, then cultural history has much to offer in historicising the multiplicity of the 'gaze' and its relationship to power.

Within the recent trend to historicise the image, mechanisms of social power have been identified as important analytical tools. David Armstrong and Nikolas Rose have both demonstrated the huge potential of Foucauldian strategies for understanding both modern medical activity and the medicalisation of life in terms of both power and the body.[47] The primacy of the body within Foucauldian thought augmented the concurrent reinvestigation into the history of the body within social history that has been undertaken since the 1970s. The concept of power expounded by Foucault was centred upon medical knowledge and applied in particular to medical

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[45] Sturken and Cartwright, *Practices of Looking*, p. 47.

[46] Laura Mulvey, 'Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema', in *Visual and Other Pleasures*, ed. by Laura Mulvey (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), pp. 14-30. Mulvey examined the ways in which women were objectified in film, and within feminist theory, she developed the concept of the 'male gaze', which occurs when the camera adopts the perspective of the heterosexual male. Within this power dynamic, men are active and women are passive.

[47] Colin Jones and Roy Porter, 'Introduction', in *Reassessing Foucault: Power, medicine and the body*, ed. Colin Jones and Roy Porter (London and New York, 2006), p. 11.

institutions. This power was based on the micro-management of human bodies through discipline.[48] He suggested that power did not derive solely from social and political institutions, nor was it exercised merely through the introduction of coercive techniques.[49] Rather it operated through the body, which was itself directly involved in the political field.[50] Ultimately power was established as an omnipresent force even amongst the apparently powerless that created docile bodies that self-regulated without any active threat of punishment.[51] Therefore, it followed that the state managed the body through public health, social hygiene, education, the regulation of reproductive practices etc., to force the body 'to emit signs', signifying its active relation to social norms.[52] Many scholars of visual culture across the humanities and social sciences have engaged with Foucault and his body-centred notion of biopower and biopolitics. For this thesis, however, his ideas remain most pertinent in exploring how the regulation of activity through modes of health education produced particular kinds of knowledge about bodies and how they 'produce[d] bodies with particular kinds of meanings and capacities' in terms of both what the government wanted and what the dominant culture admired.[53]

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[48] Roger Cooter and Claudia Stein, 'Coming into focus: Posters, power, visual culture in the history of medicine', *Medizinhistorisches* 42 (2007), pp. 180-209.

[49] Cooter and Stein, 'Coming into focus', p. 194.

[50] Cooter and Stein, 'Coming into focus', p. 194.

[51] Jones and Porter, 'Introduction', p. 9.

[52] Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans by. Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage, 1979), p. 25.

[53] Nikolas Rose, *The Politics of Life Itself. Biomedicine, Power, and Subjectivity in the Twenty-First Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007); Deborah Lupton, *Imperative of Health: Public Health and the Regulated Body* (London: Sage, 1995); Sturken and Cartwright, *Practices of Looking,* p. 350 [see: Glossary note on Biopower].

Historiographical Context

Situating the Gendered Body

This thesis traverses several historical sub-disciplines including the history of medicine, food, the body, consumer culture and advertising. It also engages with and borrows from other academic disciplines including history of art, film studies, visual culture and feminist studies. I weave together these disparate literatures through a focus on the history of the body and gender. Many historians, cultural theorists and feminist researchers have developed a growing interest in the study of the body in recent decades. While much of this work has been influenced by the writings of Foucault and his concept of biopower, social theorists and feminists have also emphasised the role of coercive disciplinary power of body norms in modern consumer culture in which a beautiful body has been identified as a key marker for success.[54] These studies have tended to either concentrate on the great social pressures placed on women to achieve normalised bodily ideals or the negative impact of patriarchy on the female body.[55]

Within this growing scholarly tradition, feminist theorists such as Susan Bordo and Naomi Wolf have singled out the role of images in forwarding a beauty-centred notion of body weight, shape and personal attractiveness. Wolf in particular identified the advertising images of women's magazines and commercial television as cultural artefacts responsible for upholding, and intensifying, what she termed 'the beauty

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[54] Roy Porter, 'History of the Body Reconsidered', in *New Perspectives on Historical Writing*, ed. by Peter Burke (London: Polity Press, 2001), pp. 233-260.

[55] See: Bordo, *Unbearable Weight*; Sharlene Hesse-Biber, *Am I Thin Enough Yet? The Cult of Thinness and the Commercialization of Identity* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1998); Naomi Wolf, *The Beauty Myth: How Images of Beauty are Used Against Women* (London: Vintage, 1991); Roberta Seid, *Never Too Thin: Why Women are at War with their Bodies* (New York: Prentice Hall Press, 1989).

myth'; a cultural system that maintains male dominance.[56] Bordo, in the preface to the tenth anniversary edition of *Unbearable Weight* entitled 'In the Empire of Images' similarly identified the potentially adverse effects of unfettered image making and viewing in a digital age. She suggested that consumer culture, in conjunction with burgeoning industries centred on diet, exercise and bodily beauty, idealise self-discipline and conforming behaviours while denigrating fatness as a social symbol for lack of will power.[57] Bordo's research utilised an array of cultural imagery, arguing that such images are never 'just pictures' but instead represent important mediators in teaching viewers how to see (and therefore judge) bodies and in constructing fantasies and ideals about how to be beautiful – how to conform to what the dominant culture demands.[58]

Certainly from an historical perspective, the body has been repeatedly identified as a site for the construction of gender identity. Conscious of the omnipresent nature of gender and the cultural influence of its duality historically, both Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska and Joan Jacobs Brumberg have emphasised the twentieth century shift towards body management and maintenance.[59] While Zweiniger-Bargielowksa argued that the body became the central site for understanding the notion of citizenship in interwar Britain, Brumberg suggested that changes in what it means to be an adolescent during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries have generated a unique combination of biological and cultural forces that

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[56] Wolf, *The Beauty Myth*, pp. 9-19.

[57] Bordo, *Unbearable Weight*, p. xxi.

[58] Bordo, *Unbearable Weight*, p. xxi.

[59] Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska, *Managing the Body: Beauty, Health and Fitness in Britain, 1880-1939* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010); Zweiniger-Bargielowska, 'The Culture of the Abdomen: Obesity and Reducing in Britain, circa 1900-1939', *Journal of British Studies* 44:2 (2005), pp. 239-273; Zweiniger-Bargielowska, 'The Making of a Modern Female Body: beauty, health and fitness in interwar Britain', *Women's History Review* 20:2 (2011), pp. 299-317; Joan Jacobs Brumberg, *The Body Project: An Intimate History of American Girls* (New York: Vintage, 1998); Jacobs Brumberg, *Fasting Girls: The Emergence of Anorexia Nervosa as a Modern Disease* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988).

have transformed the adolescent female body into a ‘template for much of the social change of the twentieth century’.[60] While these studies concentrate on different geographical locales, have limited overlapping timeframes, and adopt differing argumentative foci, they utilised gender as a central analytical tool for understanding how the body has been distinguished as a site for debating culturally contingent notions of beauty, health and fitness.

A number of women’s historians have concentrated on the ‘duty-to-beauty’ discourse and the primacy of a reducing culture, yet much of this literature focuses on either men or women.[61] In particular, Pat Kirkham’s work on female beauty discourses during the Second World War, and within the context of severe shortages of consumer goods, omitted discussion of similar shortages for men or discourses of masculinisation associated with conscription and military uniform.[62] More generally there remains very limited historical research that focuses on the history of the body in relational terms. In this respect Zweiniger-Bargielowska’s *Managing the Body* represents an important departure in the historical study of the body and its interrelationship with gender, especially in her attempts to incorporate ideals and countertypes, and examples from various life stages and different classes.[63]

Since the 1970s, cultural and social history has paid increased attention to the history of women as mothers, social actors and workers. Yet, the rewriting of women into the history of the twentieth century (and the attention that this paid to women within the private sphere of home and family) reinforced the division in much of the

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[60] Brumberg, *The Body Project*, p. xxv

[61] Proponents of this duty-to-beauty discourse include Dean MacCannell and Juliet Flower MacCannell, ‘The Beauty System’, in *The Ideology of Conduct: Essays in Literature and the History of Sexuality*, ed. by Nancy Armstrong and Leonard Tennenhouse (London: Methuen, 1987), pp. 206-238 and Wolf, *The Beauty Myth*.

[62] Pat Kirkham, ‘Beauty and Duty’: Keeping Up the (Home) Front’, in *War Culture: Social Change and Changing Experience in World War Two*, ed. by Pat Kirkham and David Thoms (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1995), pp. 13-28.

[63] Zweiniger-Bargielowska, *Managing the Body*.

extant historiography between men as public and women as private. Amanda Vickery has argued that historians need to move beyond this conception of 'separate spheres', yet many still maintained that this distinction is central to the understanding of gender.[64] Chapters Three and Four hope to go some way to rectifying this marginalisation of men, arguing that at least in terms of the visualisation of the body, both gendered femininities and gendered masculinities were constructed as tools of health education. While historically men undertook far less work within the domestic environment than their wives, they were not insusceptible to the message of visual modes of communication. As the twentieth century progressed, it became increasingly difficult for men to remain untouched by the effects of the 'gaze'. From the 1980s, the circulation of images centred on the athletic, muscular male body as an aesthetic symbol, directed at men in general, reflected the power of consumer culture to expose the gendered body to constructed social norms.[65] In this respect perhaps, beauty has become defeminised and an increasingly universal commodity. Certainly, by conceptualising men's position within the home as more multifaceted and dynamic, the divide (and indeed debate) over 'male domestication' is less significant for historicising gender.

From the 1970s, women, and later gender, were sites of committed historical enquiry. Within a British context, this feminist history developed in relation to labour history and Marxist approaches to class.[66] A distinct feminist historiography developed alongside this feminist-socialist exchange, located within a separate intellectual space occupied by women's historians and their female historical foci.

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[64] Amanda Vickery, 'Golden Age to Separate Spheres? A Review of Categories and Chronology of English Women's History', *The Historical Journal* 36:2 (1993), p. 413.

[65] Bordo, *Unbearable Weight*, p. xxiii. See also: Susan Bordo, *The Male Body: A New Look at Men in Public and in Private* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1999).

[66] For example: Anna Davin, 'Feminsim and Labour History' in Raphael Samuel, *People's History and Socialist Theory* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1981), pp. 176-181; Theodore Koditscheck, 'The Gendering of the British Working Class', *Gender and History* 9:2 (1997), pp. 333-357.

Rooted in the social sciences, these historians engaged with topics such as motherhood, female sexuality, the female body and violence against women in attempts to rewrite women into the historical narrative.[67] Yet, as second-wave feminism gained increased social and political ground during the 1970s, this separatist approach to gender history was increasingly criticised and efforts were made to move women's history and the history of gender more generally into the historical mainstream. Much feminist theorising was centred on answering significant questions regarding women's oppression, to linking Marxism with feminism or theories of capitalism with understandings of patriarchy.[68] Later however, historians of gender became increasingly interested in addressing differences *between* women, questioning the narrative of communality and shared experience that typified earlier studies. This biological determinism had omitted issues of race, ethnicity, nationality and religion from the historical discussion of gender. In particular, small-scale, specific historical studies have since been utilised to problematise that the term 'women', as an analytical category, was (and is) homogenous.[69]

As the linguistic turn penetrated history in the late 1980s, some feminist applications of the new methodology to gender history resulted in the study of representations of women and men, and the discourse about the culturally determined difference between them. Thus, gender history was increasingly concerned with social constructionism and language in relation to meaning. This challenge to the historical orthodoxy was met with hostility from many proponents of gender history. They objected to the marginalisation of women's lived experience and the removal of their historical agency in addition to the reduction of gender identity into an unstable

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[67] See: Anna Davin, 'Imperialism and Motherhood', *History Workshop Journal* 5 (1978), pp. 9-65;

[68] Billie Melman, 'Changing the Subject: Women's History and Historiography, 1900-2000', in *Women in Twentieth-Century Britain*, ed. by Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska (Harlow: Pearson Education, 2001), pp. 16-34.

[69] Melman, 'Changing the Subject', pp. 30-34.

object.[70] In particular, Judith Butler argued that there was no fundamental female identity and that gender was merely performance. By undermining the notion of a core gender for either men or women, Butler attempted to break the link between gender and sex so that gender could be 'free floating and not 'caused' by other stable factors'.[71] Other critics of this challenge to the irretrievability of experience identified this emphasis on the multiplicity of identities and denied women's autonomy and the possibility of a feminist politic, which they identified as the key conservatism of poststructuralism.[72]

However more recently, historians of women and gender have argued that the study of language and semiotics does not have to jettison either female agency or an emphasis on experience. In particular, studies on the role of women within the First and Second World Wars have exposed the capacity for including the independent action of women within, and in relation to, the powerful apparatus of government. Until recently, histories of war often concentrated on examining the role of the military at the expense of the cultural and social context. Studies of femininity and masculinity during war and recognition of male and female agency have complicated our understandings of the home front, the development of social welfare and the rise of active citizenship.[73] Furthermore, they have facilitated a re-commitment to historicise lived experience, with an active and present awareness that constructions of gender were inflected by wider issues of class, race, regionalism etc. These were therefore open to a number of possible interpretations that enrich our understandings

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[70] Melman, 'Changing the Subject', pp. 32.

[71] Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (London and New York: Routledge, 1990), p. 6.

[72] Melman, 'Changing the Subject', p. 30-34.

[73] In particular, see: Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska, *Austerity in Britain: Rationing, Controls, and Consumption, 1939-1955* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); Sonya O. Rose, *Which People's War? National Identity and Citizenship in Britain 1939-1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003); Lucy Noakes, *War and the British: Gender, Memory and National Identity* (London: I.B. Tauris, 1998); Jean Bethke Elshtain, *Women and War* (Chicago and London: Chicago University Press, 1995).

of the past. Penny Summerfield has demonstrated how women during the Second World War were active agents in 'speak[ing] for themselves' and were capable of rejecting official languages concerning femininity, motherhood and work.[74] Zweiniger-Bargielowska, in her research on austerity in wartime and postwar Britain, has similarly asserted the centrality of women to the story of austerity, not simply because they were usually responsible for translating government policies into feasible practices for shopping, cooking and eating, but because their response was complex and long-lasting.[75] Indeed, the political power of housewife dissatisfaction that dogged the Labour postwar government and the continuation of austerity measures long after the end of the war have been identified as key factors in the Conservative victory in 1951.[76] Such studies have not only extended and complicated understandings of war, but have also emphasised that these were not purely masculine experiences, but gendered ones in which both women and men had relative agency.

In many ways linear narratives of progress for women are inadequate in historicising the past. While the shift towards gender history has emphasised centring women within general histories, this very approach has emphasised the importance of a relative approach to gender relations. This thesis similarly adopts a relational understanding of gender in terms of the body. By focussing on visual images, more nuanced understandings of gender in relation to the body and health are explored. Such images were directed at both male and female audiences, and provide an underutilised source for exploring how gender was constructed within wartime and postwar Britain. The visual interplay between public health and commercial enterprise

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[74] Penny Summerfield, 'Culture and Composure: Creating Narratives of the Gendered Self in Oral History Interviews', *Culture and Social History* 1:1 (2004), pp. 67.

[75] Zweiniger-Bargielowska, *Austerity in Britain.*

[76] Zweiniger-Bargielowska, *Austerity in Britain,* pp. 261-262. James Hinton, 'Militant Housewives: The British Housewives' League and the Attlee Government', *History Workshop Journal* 38 (1994), pp. 129-156.

exposes a fragility in the stability of gender relations related to health and aesthetics, which offers traction on why healthy body images have altered so much over the past century. In many ways, this thesis, although adopting a different central source base, builds upon scholarly work on gender and the body, asserting that as the body was increasingly visualised, these developments had different, if relational, implications for men and women within the context of chronic disease and an increasingly imagistic consumer culture.

Zweiniger-Bargielowska has linked the pre-First World War and interwar preoccupation with body management for both men and women to contemporaneous debates about racial fitness and active citizenship. My work reveals that in the postwar period, at least, such concerns with citizenry were disrupted and supplanted by a fitness culture tied to individualism, status and self-representation.[77] The gendered body was recognised as a site for forging new identities which contributed to the emergence of more equal gender relations, but which ultimately changed little. For Zweiniger-Bargielowska, the male body was the first to be scrutinised in terms of physicality, but this was very much in terms of racial fitness and discourses around Empire. During the postwar period in particular, I argue that it was the slender female body that was constructed as the epitome of normative beauty and the site of conventional femininity. This perception in terms of the 'beautiful body' later extended to men, with the disciplined, well-managed and visibly toned male body heralded as the marker of hegemonic masculinity, especially from the 1980s. In these ways gender was still very much to the fore within discourses of health and beauty in the postwar period. With the rise of sedentary lifestyles and chronic diseases after the Second World War, visual images of beautiful bodies, accompanied by anxieties

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[77] See: Sassatelli, *Fitness* Culture, pp. 1-16.

about obesity and fitness, multiplied. Body norms were now re-identified as important social and cultural markers for health.

The Rise of the Chronic Eater

The proliferation of chronic diseases during the twentieth century has only received significant scholarly attention since the 1990s. This literature has approached chronicity from numerous and multifarious perspectives, including medical research, community medicine, disease management and medical noncompliance discourse.[78] However, despite the outwardly wide-ranging features of these literatures there remain notable absences in existing analyses of chronic disease development in the twentieth century. In particular, the focus on chronic-infectious diseases such as tuberculosis, polio and typhoid all demonstrate a different aetiology and medical response, centred largely on long-term communicability, than for conventional chronic conditions.[79] Similarly, numerous cancers, despite their chronic disease

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[78] See: Joan Austoker and Linda Bryder, *Historical Perspectives on the Role of the MRC: Essays on the History of the Medical Research Council of the UK and its predecessor, the Medical Research Committee, 1913-1953* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989); Shaun Murphy, 'The Early Days of the MRC Social Medicine Research Unit', *Social History of Medicine* 12:3 (1999), pp. 389-406; Dorothy Porter, *Social Medicine and Medical Sociology in the Twentieth Century* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1997); John Welshman, 'The Medical Officer of Health in England, 1900-1974: Watchdog or Lapdog?, *Journal of Public Health* 19:4 (1997), pp. 443-450; Jane Lewis, *What Price Community Medicine: The Philosophy, Practice and Politics of Public Health since 1919* (Brighton: Wheatsheaf Books, 1987); Charles Webster, *The Health Services since the War, Vol II*; Jeremy A Greene, 'Therapeutic Infidelities: 'Noncompliance' Enters the Medical Literature, 1955-1975', *Social History of Medicine* 17:3 (2004), pp. 327-343; For definitions of chronic disease see: David Armstrong, *Political Anatomy of the Body: Medical Knowledge in Britain in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); George Weisz, *Chronic Disease in the Twentieth Century* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2014).

[79] For an examination of tuberculosis in Britain during the twentieth century see: Bryder, *Below the Magic Mountain*; Stephanie Kirby, 'Sputum and the Scent of Wallflowers: Nursing in Tuberculosis Sanatoria, 1920-1970, *Social History of Medicine* 23:3 (2010), pp. 602-620, Anne Hardy, 'Reframing Disease: Changing Perception of Tuberculosis in England and Wales 1938-1970, *Historical Research* 76 (2003), pp. 535-556, John Welshman, 'Tuberculosis and Ethnicity in England and Wales 1950-1970', *Sociology of Health and Illness* 2 (2000), pp. 858-882. For typhoid see: Judith Walzer Leavitt, *Typhoid Mary: Captive to the Public's Health*, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1996), Anne Hardy, *The Epidemic Streets*; Nigel Richardson, 'The Uppington Typhoid Outbreaks of 1875-1877: A Rural Case Study in Public Health Reform', *Social History of Medicine* 20:2 (2007), pp. 281-296. For polio see: David M. Oshinsky, *Polio: An American Story* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press,

classification, have remained unresponsive to treatment and can result in relatively rapid mortality. Like chronic-contagious disease, such chronic-acute conditions require a differing medical framework for treatment than many other long-term diseases such as coronary heart disease, hypertension or diabetes mellitus. Medical responses for these non-communicable, non-acute, chronic conditions, have centred on modes of prevention, surveillance, and where possible, early medical intervention. This latter framework, in particular, facilitated the development of self-care practices, allowing for greater patient self-monitoring of long-term conditions. It is within this specific medical practice arrangement that my examination of the visualisation of food and diet as a chronic disease risk factor is located. I situate these images within the postwar discourse of lifestyle choice, behavioural change and epidemiologically based public health. Therefore, by targeting an understudied, yet crucial, aspect of mid-late twentieth century medical practice and public health in Britain, my thesis repositions the role of the visual in constructing disease risk.

Histories of diet and disease have tended to focus almost exclusively on deficiency and the rapid development of vitamin science during the first half of the twentieth century.[80] Indeed, it was not until deficiency risk for the majority population was overcome, that nutrition science began to focus on understanding the proliferation of diseases associated with overeating within the context of risk-factor

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2005), Naomi Rogers, ‘Silence has its Own Stories: Elizabeth Kenny, Polio and the Culture of Medicine’, *Social History of Medicine* 21:8 (2008), pp. 145-161.

[80] Anne Hardy, ‘Rickets and the rest: Childcare, Diet and Infectious Children’s Diseases, 1850-1914’, *Social History of Medicine* 5:3 (1992), pp. 389-412; Rima D. Apple, *Vitamania: Vitamins in American Culture* (New Brunswick, 1996); Rima Apple, ‘“Advertised by our loving friends”: The Infant Formula Industry and the Creation of New Pharmaceutical Markets, 1870-1910’, *Journal of History and the Allied Sciences*, 41 (1986), pp. 3-23; Sally M. Horrocks, ‘The Business of Vitamins: Nutrition Science and the Food Industry in Inter-war Britain’, in *The Science and Culture of Nutrition, 1840-1940*, ed. by Harmke Kamminga and Andrew Cunningham (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1995), pp. 235-248. A notable exception is Mark W. Bufton and Virginia Berridge, ‘Post-war nutrition science and policy making in Britain, c. 945-1954: the case of diet and heart disease’, in *Food, Science, Policy and Regulation in the Twentieth Century: International and comparative perspectives,* ed. by David F. Smith and Jim Philips (London: Routledge, 2000), pp. 207-222.

epidemiology.[81] Harmke Kamminga has emphasised the legitimacy of contemporary concern about the dissemination of vitamin information to the public by means of commercial advertisements during the 1920s and 1930s.[82] By approaching the popularisation of vitamins as 'a multifunctional process involving many constituencies', Kamminga contended that vitamin researchers, themselves intimately involved in the promulgation of scientific information through non-specialist publications, were integral to the process of both creating and establishing vitamins as scientific, and therefore worthy of everyday consideration by the public.[83] While Rima Apple has focused on the interaction between vitamin science and consumerism both have argued that vitamins became increasingly difficult to contest as they were incorporated within wider bodies of knowledge.[84] Apple charted the use of vitamins to promote patriotism during the Second World War and for the circulation of ideas associated with 'scientific motherhood' while Kamminga suggested that vitamins were attributed new meanings by different publics.[85] My work intends to adopt a similar perspective, while suggesting that such popularisation is not a mere unidirectional transfer of knowledge from experts to the lay public but rather representational of a cycle of exchanges, with 'facts' often adapted and changed for specific purposes. In this way, during the postwar period, the food industry was able

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[81] Derek Oddy and Derek Miller, *The Making of the Modern British Diet* (London: Rowman and Littlefield, 1976); Bufton and Berridge, 'Post-war nutrition science and policy making' pp. 207-222; 'Virginia Berridge, 'Public Health in the Twentieth Century, 1945-2000' in *Public Health in History,* ed. by Virginia Berridge, Martin Gorsky and Alex Mold (Maidenhead: Open University Press, 2011), p. 198; George Davey Smith and Diana Kuh, 'Does Early Nutrition Effect Later Health? Views from the 1930s and 1980s', in *Nutrition in Britain: Science, Scientists and Politics in the Twentieth Century*, ed. by David F. Smith and Jim Philips (London: Routledge, 1997), pp. 214-237; Tim Lang, 'Going Public: Food Campaigns during the 1980s and early 1990s', in *Nutrition in Britain: Science, Scientists and Politics in the Twentieth Century,* ed. by David F. Smith (London: Routledge, 1997), pp. 238-260.

[82] Kamminga, "Axes to Grind'', pp. 83-100.

[83] Kamminga, ''Axes to Grind': Popularising the Science of Vitamins', p. 84.

[84] Apple, *Vitamania*, pp. 33-53.

[85] Rima Apple, 'Vitamins win the war: nutrition, commerce and patriotism in the United States during the Second World War', in *Food, Science, Policy and Regulation in the Twentieth Century: International and comparative perspectives,* ed. by David F. Smith and Jim Philips (London: Routledge, 2000), pp. 135-150.

to appropriate the language of self-help and the mantra of healthy eating within the realm of commercial advertising to disseminate knowledge about disease. Furthermore, their reliance on visualising the 'conventional' consumer as the harbinger of nutritional knowledge constructed the notion of the educated layperson.

The important position which nutrition science came to occupy within British food and pharmaceutical manufacturing in the interwar period has been assessed by Sally Horrocks. She redressed an important gap in the historical literature pertaining to the links between both the British pharmaceutical industry and food marketing, in conjunction with the commercialisation of nutrition theories.[86] Interwar nutritional science was typified by a commitment on the part of leading food and pharmaceutical enterprises to devoting significant resources to the 'discovery' of new scientific knowledge.[87] While contributing to the growth of nutritional science in this way, industrial scientists utilised that information to produce new products and modify existing lines. Horrocks' work provides very relevant historical analysis of industrial and pharmaceutical developments in Britain during the first half of the twentieth century. It therefore offers interesting points of convergence and divergence for my study of similar developments in the post-war period. Indeed, as I examine in Chapter Four, the pharmaceutical industry was by no means the only sector capitalising on the changing nutritional science environment. On the contrary, Unilever P.L.C. conceived of and marketed the Flora margarine brand as a health product. This represented a

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[86] Sally M. Horrocks, 'Nutrition Science and the Food and Pharmaceutical Industries in Inter-war Britain', in *Nutrition in Britain: Science, Scientists and Politics in the Twentieth Century*, ed. by David F. Smith (London: Routledge, 1997), pp. 53-74.

[87] As well as contributing to research on the development of new, scientifically-based nutrition knowledge, the food and pharmaceutical industries also developed new health practices such as advertising the benefits of infant formula instead of breast milk to new mothers. See: Apple, 'Advertised by Our Loving Friends', pp. 3-23; Rima Apple, 'The Medicalization of Infant Feeding in the United States and New Zealand: Two Countries, One Experience', *Journal of Human Lactation* 10:31 (1994), pp. 31-37.

new departure, where an associated health claim was linked to the nutritional value of a margarine brand as a low cholesterol butter substitute.

A further trend in the extant literature explains the emergence of public health initiatives such as infant feeding and school milk schemes in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.[88] Lawrence T. Weaver and Hilary Marland have both emphasised the important role assumed by the infant welfare movement within a local context. [89] Marland, in particular, highlighted the centrality of health visiting in propagating information regarding hygiene and proper infant-feeding practices amongst local populations. Within an American context Apple examined the switch from breast-feeding to physician-led bottle-feeding during the twentieth century.[90] She argued that the medicalisation of feeding practices (in conjunction with the institutionalisation of childbirth) represented an important shift in the scope of medicine within modern society. She suggested that there was a strong correlation between this shift and the proliferation of advertisements by the infant-formula pharmaceutical industry in the US.[91] By highlighting the many and multi-faceted social and medical factors – research, marketing, pharmaceuticals, legislation, consumer protection – which contributed to the shift in infant feeding during the twentieth century (and by emphasising the role of manufacturers and their advertising campaigns in this change), Apple has provided a feasible working model for examining the role of advertisements in modern self-care practices. While my

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[88] John Welshman, 'School Meals and Milk in England and Wales, 1906-1945', *Medical History* 41 (1997), pp. 6-29.

[89] Lawrence T. Weaver, 'Growing Babies: Defining the Milk Requirements of Infants, 1890-1910', *Social History of Medicine,* 23:2 (2010), pp. 320-337; Hilary Marland, 'A Pioneer in Infant Welfare Feeding: The Huddersfield Scheme 1903-1920, *Social History of Medicine* 5 (1993), pp. 25-49.

[90] Rima Apple, 'The Medicalization of Infant Feeding in the United States and New Zealand: Two Countries, One Experience', *The Journal of Human Lactation*, 10:31 (1994), pp. 31-37; Rima Apple, 'Constructing Mothers: Scientific Motherhood in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries', *Social History of Medicine*, 8:2 (1995), pp. 161-178; Rima Apple, *Mothers and Medicine: A Social History of Infant Feeding, 1890-1950* (Madison WN: University of Wisconsin Press, 1987).

[91] Apple, ''Advertised by our loving friends', pp. 3-23.

application will notably differ from Apple, particularly due to my emphasis on the visual representations themselves, I will similarly contextualise these images within a changing public health environment.

Within the context of burgeoning chronicity, nutritional therapy has remained a mainstay of treatment for specific diseases during the twentieth century. Diet treatments have been extensively introduced for the treatment of diabetes in particular, with the development of starvation diets during the early modern period and the later proliferation of low-carbohydrate, high fat diets during the nineteenth century.[92] Whilst severe calorie restriction was ultimately discarded, even after the discovery and widespread usage of insulin therapy for diabetics during the 1920s and 1930s, the administration of suitable dietary regimes remained the initial therapeutic response.[93] Pharmacological treatment was, and indeed remains, a secondary line of treatment in diabetes based on the efficacy (or not) of dietary management.[94] This emphasis on diet as a central facet of disease management techniques is applicable to other chronic diseases during the twentieth century. Dietary management, as part of a number of treatment measures, was employed for heart disease, high cholesterol, hypertension and obesity. The case of diabetes highlights the porous boundary between eating and treating, and the social and medical expectations attributed to nutritional therapeutics.[95] Whilst such therapies were important aspects of biomedical treatment, obesity and heart disease in particular have also engendered debate with regard to their possible genetic dimension within a multi-causal framework. Over the

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[92] Elizabeth Lane Furdell, *Fatal Thirst: Diabetes in Britain until Insulin* (Leiden: Koninklijke Brill, 2009), pp. 123-146.

[93] Martin Moore, ‘A question of control?: managing diabetes and its professionals in Britain, 1910-1994’ (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Warwick, 2014); Rae LI Lyon, ‘The Early Days of Insulin Use in Edinburgh’, *British Medical Journal*, 301 (1990), pp. 22-29; Michael Bliss, *The Discovery of Insulin* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982).

[94] National Institutes of Health: National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, *Diabetes in America* (Bethesda MD, 1995), pp. 519-525.

[95] Xaq Frohlich, ‘Accounting for Taste: Regulating Food Labeling in the ‘Affluent Society’, 1945-1995’ (unpublished doctoral thesis, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2011).

last half century, human obesity has been understood to comprise a plurality of causes amongst which genetic predisposition has been increasingly reasserted.[96] While my work will not directly engage with the development of modern genetics, the discovery of the structure of DNA (1953) or the consequent attempts to map disease-causing genes; these changes have emphasised the possible role of genetics in chronic disease causation.[97] My focus on visual representations, which themselves ignore genetic causality, necessitates the omission of these disparate and varying causal strategies. Similarly, my decision to use coronary heart disease as a tracer condition not only focuses my study toward those population-level risk factors that informed widespread visual imaging, but also reveals a gender dichotomy that otherwise might not be easily visible.

Histories of Consumption and Consumerism

Most historical research examining the interactions between diet, disease prevention and consumerism has been completed within an American context. Rima Apple, in particular, has sought to account for the popularity of vitamins since the Progressive Era (1890s-1920s) in the US.[98] She argued that despite the lack of scientific consensus, promoters and producers were committed to proving the efficacy of the vitamin to the American public. The controversy between those experts who believed in the merits of vitamin supplementation and those scientists who did not subscribe to this emerging science exposed the initial ambivalence towards vitamins. Yet, simultaneously this same controversy emphasised the rhetorical power of advertising

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[96] Sander Gilman, *Fat: A Cultural History of Obesity* (Cambridge MA: Polity Press, 2008), pp. 20-21.

[97] William Leeming, 'The Early History of Medical Genetics in Canada', *Social History of Medicine* 17:3 (2004), pp. 481-500.

[98] Rima Apple, 'Science Gendered: Nutrition in the United States, 1840-1940', in *The Science and Culture of Nutrition*, ed. by Harmke Kamminga and Andrew Cunningham (Amsterdam, Rodopi, 1995), pp. 129-154.

to expose the ‘benefits’ of science to the American public.[99] In this way consumer culture became an important force for disseminating health information regarding vitamins to the public.[100] The intimate relationship between consumerism and medicine, so prominent during the twentieth century within an American environment, has yet to be accorded commensurate scholarly attention within Britain. My thesis goes some way towards addressing this imbalance, with my particular methodology affording a comparative approach to understanding both governmental and commercial visualisation processes in consumerist terms.

Importantly, the popularisation of vitamins initiated the development and later widespread application of new management methods concerning the availability of health information later in the twentieth century. One such method that facilitated the formulation of specific health claims by food manufacturers was the food product label. For their part, labels have often acted as a medium by which to popularise scientific and technical knowledge, and to provoke new ways of thinking about food. Xaq Frohlich argued that the turn to food labelling as an aspect of food policy integrated with a broader political shift toward neo-liberalism in 1970s American society.[101] Therefore, he argued, nutrition labelling should be understood as an important aspect of a ‘mobilisation of markets’, which sought to make food choice, and consequently aspects of public health, an issue of individual responsibility and choice. Furthermore, labels utilised the language of self-care, which has been continually propagated since the general acceptance of risk-factor epidemiology

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[99] Apple, Vitamania, p. 13-25.

[100] Apple, *Vitamania,* pp. 13-32. See also: Nancy Tomes, *The Gospel of Germs: men, women and the microbe in American life* (Cambridge MA and London: Harvard University Press, 1998); Nancy Tomes ‘‘Skeletons in the medicine closet’: women and ‘rational consumption’ in the inter-war American home’, in *Health and the Modern Home*, ed. by Mark Jackson (London: Routledge, 2007), pp. 177-195; Nancy Tomes, ‘Merchants of Health: Medicine and Consumer Culture in the United States, 1900-1940’, *Journal of American History* 88:2 (2001), pp. 519-547.

[101] Xaq Frohlich, ‘Accounting for Taste: Regulating Food Labelling in the Affluent Society 1945-1995’ (unpublished doctoral thesis, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2011) .

during the 1960s.[102] Regulatory clashes over health labels on foodstuffs, especially those of the low-fat and low-calorie variety, resonated with broader cultural concerns in the post-war period about 'diseases of civilisation' and their relationship with the modern consumer.[103] Certainly as outlined by Frohlich, the long history of formal and informal classifications of ingestible products in the US throughout the twentieth century - whole foods, organic foods, health foods, medical foods, health tonics, vitamin supplements – further revealed this ambiguous boundary between food consumption and therapeutics.[104] I suggest that visual advertisements aimed at disseminating a health message (governmental or commercial) operated in similar ways, constructing certain foods as healthy and at times emphasising beneficial properties as therapeutic. As Chapter Four will elucidate, this was especially the case for Flora margarine, with much of its visual advertising centred on its 'healing effects' through long-term consumption.

In a similar vein, Robert Fitzsimmons at the MIT Media Lab has examined the institutional interactions and core values of health claims which have ensured that such products enjoyed an enthusiastic consumer base, resulting in profitable new markets since the 1980s.[105] Like Frohlich, he too has emphasised the significance of food labels in facilitating the link between particular nutrients and disease prevention through his assessment of the 'oat bran craze' in the United States during the late 1980s.[106] By focussing on the interactions between Quaker Oats and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Fitzsimmons outlined the importance of consumer

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[102] Frohlich, 'Accounting for Taste', p. 19.

[103] Charles Rosenberg, 'Pathologies of Progress: The Idea of Civilisation at Risk', *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 72:4 (1998), pp. 714-730. 'Diseases of civilisation' were also contemporaneously known as 'diseases of affluence'.

[104] Frohlich, 'Accounting for Taste', p. 40.

[105] Robert Fitzsimmons, 'Oh, What Those Oats Can Do: Quaker Oats, the Food and Drug Administration, and the Market Value of Scientific Evidence 1984-2010', *Comprehensive Reviews in Food Science and Food Safety* 11 (2012), pp. 56-89.

[106] Fitzsimmons, 'Oh What Those Oats Can Do', p. 61-63, Frohlich, 'Accounting for Taste', pp. 13-71.

confidence in branded products and the value of scientific evidence within modern consumerism. Both Fitzsimmons and Frohlich have provided critical scholarly investigations into the development of food labelling and the centrality of health claims to this narrative in the US during the late twentieth century. They impart an effective analytical framework for assessing how marketing initiatives for specific products communicated scientific evidence to the public and the emergent centrality of food labelling to the diet-disease prevention thesis.

This growth of a science-based consumerism was not solely an American phenomenon. On the contrary, with the stabilisation, and later expansion of food supplies in the postwar period in Britain, there were increased market opportunities for the development of new healthy eating products and diet supplements. However this particular aspect in the growth of nutrition-centred health concerns has remained notably absent from historical investigation within a British context.[107] My thesis will redress this historiographical neglect, re-focusing scholarly attention on the multi-factored nature of postwar nutrition. The importance of branded food products as an agent for the dissemination of health education information should not be underestimated during a period when 'there has been a shift from [a] focus on consumers *eating* foods to consumers *reading* foods: an informational turn'.[108] Therefore the influence of advertising methods and consumer-orientated approaches were visible within the post-war British public health paradigm where models of 'selling' health were central to public and privately led programmes of popular education.

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[107] A number of industrial studies refer to this in relation to market diversification. For example see: W. J. Reader, *Birds Eye: The Early Years* (Walton-on-Thames: Birds Eye Food Ltd., 1963) and Geoffrey Jones, *Renewing Unilever: Transformation and Tradition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

[108] Frohlich, 'Accounting for Taste', p. 55.

Much recent literature on postwar consumerism in Britain has tended to focus narrowly on the development of consumer organisations.[109] Such studies have tended to concentrate on consumerism in relation to the state and around issues of affluence in postwar Britain. Stefan Schwarzkopf has suggested that this idea of affluence, and indeed affluence for all, was closely embedded in Cold War geopolitics that in turn gave rise to a number of influential consumer protection groups during the second half of the twentieth century.[110] Yet, within the context of health and medical provision, Alex Mold has argued for the important role that patient-consumer groups played in constructing the patient as consumer.[111] She asserted that such consumers were never more than constructed figures, which allowed both the government and patient groups to project their ideas. Mold added that the later intervention of the state was crucial for this construction and the associated roles occupied by patient groups.[112] It was the governmental appropriation of consumerist policies that ensured the continued presence of the patient-consumer within healthcare and the National Health Service (NHS), even when such voluntary organisations lost control of the agenda. While my research only links to these studies in part, they nevertheless represent important contributions to the complex and multifaceted nature of consumption and consumerism in postwar Britain, themselves important thematic considerations that impinge on many aspects of my thesis.

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[109] For example see: Matthew Hilton, 'Consumer Politics in Post-war Britain', in *The Politics of Consumption: Material Culture and Citizenship in Europe and America*, ed. by Martin Daunton and Matthew Hilton (Oxford: Berg, 2001), pp. 241-259 and Matthew Hilton, *Consumerism in Twentieth Century Britain: the search for a historical movement* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003). For example, consumers within the NHS gained a political active voice through the development of patient-consumer groups. For other examples of consumer organization development in postwar Britain, but this time with a focus on the NHS see: Alex Mold, 'Patient Groups and the Construction of the Patient Consumer in Britain: An Historical Overview', *Journal of Social Policy* 39:4 (2010), pp. 505-521; Alex Mold, 'Making the Patient Consumer in Margaret Thatcher's Britain', *History Journal* 54:2 (2011), pp. 509-528; Alex Mold, 'Patients' Rights and the National Health Service in Britain, 1960s-1980s', *American Journal of Public Health* 102:11 (2012), pp. 2030-2038.

[110] Stefan Schwarzkopf, 'They do it with Mirrors: Advertising and British Cold War Consumer Politics', *Contemporary British History* 19:2 (2005), pp. 133-150.

[111] Mold, 'Patient Groups and the Construction of the Patient Consumer in Britain', pp. 505-521.

[112] Mold, 'Patient Groups and the Construction of the Patient Consumer in Britain', p. 518.

More directly pertinent to my research, however, are sociological studies tracing the development of consumer culture. Roberta Sassatelli explored the historical development of Western consumer culture to provide a reading of the social, economic and geopolitical transformation that this development necessitated.[113] She has also traced the related development of a fitness culture within twentieth century society. In doing so, she emphasised the importance of the lithe, energetic body as an icon of Western culture constructed through advertising and consumer culture.[114] While her investigations adopt a pan-European and United States focus, drawing out broad, transnational themes, her work provides important contextual background on the connections between changes in consumer culture and the identification of the body as a marker of consumerist, and by extension, social norms.

By focussing on the visual construction of a link between chronic disease (in this case coronary heart disease) and diet, this thesis engages with changing understandings of nutrition as well as new modes of food consumption. Correlations between diet and disease risk resulted in the creation of new markets for healthy eating, which were built on the previous promotion of vitamin supplementation earlier in the twentieth century.[115] Certainly, targeted advertising represented not only a means for producers to create product demand but – as it began to employ scientific and medical hypotheses about diet and disease – also helped propagate scientific knowledge about the interface between food and health. In this way, my thesis

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[113] See: Roberta Sassatelli, *Consumer Culture: History, Theory and Politics* (London: Sage, 2007).

[114] Sassatelli, *Fitness Culture*; Roberta Sassatelli, 'The Commericialisation of Discipline: Keep-Fit Culture and its Values', *Journal of Modern Italian Studies* 5:3 (2000) pp. 396-411; Roberta Sassatelli, 'Interaction Order and Beyond: A Field Analysis of Body Culture within Fitness Gyms', *Body and Society* 5:2-3 (1999), pp. 227-248.

[115] For the earlier popularisation of vitamins, Kamminga, ''Axes to grind'', pp. 83-100 is particularly informative. For changes in retailing culture see: Rachel Bowlby, *Carried Away: The Invention of Modern Shopping* (London: Faber, 2000); Kim Humphrey, *Shelf Life: Supermarkets and the Changing Cultures of Consumption* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Ralph Jessen and Lydia Langer, *Transformations of Retailing in Europe since 1945* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012).

explores the popularisation of nutrition and disease prevention as a problem of individual risk through the visualisation processes of public health campaigns and new modes of food consumption.

Methodology

This thesis links approaches in the social history of medicine with the field of visual studies in order to analyse the ways images constructed knowledge about diet, disease, gender and the body. To do this I engage with the historiographical developments of the 'visual turn', which sought to foreground images as an important source of historical knowledge.[116] I aim to historicise these images as important vehicles of information provision, reclaiming their importance in the historical understanding of disease risk and the body in postwar Britain. These visual sources offer valuable insights into both the institutional and social attitudes towards bodies and disease. I suggest that they operate beyond depicting health and medicine alone, but rather, act as instruments for instigating behavioural change – one tool in the government's attempt to achieve a healthful population. The increased epistemological status given to images in historical analysis has influenced histories of public health in recent years, emphasising the importance of the visual in establishing a public awareness of disease. Such aspects of health campaigns pertaining to nutrition and health have ultimately become central to wider investigations of cultural perceptions of disease, the body and gender relations both past and present.

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[116] Gilman, *Picturing Health and Illness*; Gilman, *Disease and Representation*; Paula Treichler, *How to Have Theory in an Epidemic: Cultural Chronicles of AIDS* (Durham, NC, 1999); Bernstein, 'Envisioning Health in Revolutionary Russia', pp. 191-217; Gorsky, Krajewski-Siuda, Dutka and Berridge, 'Anti-Alcohol Posters in Poland, 1945-1989', pp. 2059-2069; Ludmilla Jordanova, *The Look of the Past: Visual and Material Evidence in Historical Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

My approach to visual analysis borrows much from art history, reading images as cultural artefacts which construct and code visual content in ways that are specific, culturally contingent and complex. They resist straightforward ‘reading’, yet they ‘say’ things and construct meaning in ways very different to their textual counterparts. I contend that images are active agents in the narrativisation of the past and therefore their historicisation is particularly valuable. They contribute to and produce different historical perspectives, ask different questions and expose alternative answers to textual understandings of the past. By engaging in close analysis of these images, I expose how the visual, in relation to food and disease in wartime and postwar Britain, sell different ‘ways of eating’. Food is established as an agent of preventive medicine sold for, and consumed by the individual. Stylistically these images construct food, gender and the body in different ways, but as a collective they represent food as a modern medicine. Each image in its own way, sells a particular iteration of a healthy lifestyle, closely related to ingestible products.

My thesis also engages with a number of filmic and televisual sources. I employ mise-en-scène film criticism to reveal the role moving images played in constructing new understandings of the interactions between health and disease that went beyond the biological. Moving images also disseminated ideas about the healthy or unhealthy body and notably what such bodies ‘looked’ like. Film and television broadcasts functioned as more than educational aids; they were also ‘vehicles of … communication’[117], that contained explicit and implicit messages regarding gender,

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[117] In his work on science films and television, Tim Boon considers their role as ‘vehicles of scientific communication’ between scientists/filmmakers and the public. Boon borrows this concept from Steven Shapin. Boon, *Films of Fact: A History of Science in Documentary Films and Television*, (London: Wallflower, 2007), pp. 5-6.

diet, the body and the practice of education.[118] By treating these moving images as forms of communication, I will question those messages that were conveyed and *how* they were transmitted through the audio-visual medium of film and television.[119] Like Jordanova and Lisa Cartwright I will use these moving visual sources to question how scientific technologies construct seemingly *natural* images of 'life', and in particular the body.[120] Cartwright argued that physiological understandings of bodily processes were particularly influenced by the development of cinematography, showing bodies (and parts of bodies) in motion.[121] She suggested that it was through medical recording and viewing that bodies were temporally and spatially decomposed and reconfigured as dynamic fields of action requiring control.[122] Chapter Three will expand further on the applicability of this approach to the study of chronic disease risk factors in 1970s and 1980s Britain. In this way the technology of the film and television programme is linked with this medical authority over 'life' and understandings of 'the body, gender, and cultural identity'.[123] With regard to the public health film, I am indebted to the working model provided by Tim Boon. His assertion that these films employed certain genre conventions and 'modes of address' in order to construct 'particular relationships … between the authority they represented and their audiences', is particularly valuable to my investigation.[124]

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[118] In an influential analysis of visual sources in the history of medicine, Sander Gilman notes that images convey 'simultaneous, multiple meanings', both explicit and implicit. Gilman, *Picturing Health and Illness,* pp. 31 and 116.

[119] Alison Bashford and Carolyn Strange note a gap in the historiography of sex education regarding '*how* rather than *what* sex knowledge was offered and obtained. Alison Bashford and Carolyn Strange, 'Public Pedagogy: Sex Education and Mass Communication in the Mid-Twentieth Century', *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 13:1 (2004), p. 73.

[120] Cartwright, *Screening the Body*, pp. xi-xv.

[121] Cartwright, *Screening the Body*, pp. xii-xiii.

[122] Cartwright, *Screening the Body*, p. xi.

[123] Cartwright, *Screening the Body*, p. xvi.

[124] Tim Boon, 'Health Education Films in Britain, 1919-1939: production, genres and audience', in *Signs of Life: Cinema and Medicine*, ed. by Graeme Harper and Andrew Moor (London: Wallflower Press, 2005), p. 54. See also Boon, *Films of Fact*, pp. 142-45.

While these visual and cinematographic sources provide rich material for histories on the interactions between diet and disease, they also involve certain limitations. As Kelly Loughlin highlighted, they raise issues of access and preservation that limit the extent to which these sources are available to historians.[125] Unfortunately, much health-focused television programming by the both the BBC and ITV from the 1960s and 1970s is not publicly accessible or has not survived in full. Due in part to the patchy nature of such sources, this thesis adopts close 'textual' analysis to understand how the specific case can inform our wider understandings of broader examples.[126] Loughlin argued that content analyses of audio-visual sources should maintain 'an awareness of particular forms or formats – the way they develop over time, [and] their association with and/or distinction from other modes of representation'.[127] However, I suggest that the task of comparing these disparate and temporally remote sources could represent a potential pitfall. While such images (whether moving or static) can be understood to contribute to a holistic understanding of certain past events or ideas, the content and visual representation utilised in such images remains unique in terms of meaning construction. I would argue that while they may overlap and intersect thematically, such images are often idiosyncratic with their own 'look' and as such each image should be analysed and understood to stand alone within wider, non-visual contexts.

My approach also incorporates feminist theories in examining the gendered body as a visual element of wartime and postwar advertisements. Foucauldian strategies are particularly useful for understanding the medicalisation of life in terms

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[125] Kelly Loughlin, 'The History of Health and Medicine in Contemporary Britain: Reflections on the Role of Audio-Visual Sources', *Social History of Medicine* 13:1 (2000), pp. 142-45.

[126] By 'close textual analysis' here I am referring to the wider move within film studies that views individual films as texts and analyses them through close 'readings' often in order to understand meaning construction.

[127] Loughlin, 'The History of Health and Medicine', pp. 134-35.

of power.[128] The notion of biopower, the governance and self-regulation of individuals and populations through practices associated with the control of the body are important to my examination of the body within visual practices and for recognising the centrality of health education (incorporating both governmental and commercial initiatives) as a tool for prompting behaviour modification and as a normalising and self-regulating practice. In this way my project evaluates health education in its widest possible sense to incorporate those public educative efforts of the food industry as well as those efforts made by central government. By utilising this broad model of health education I assess the inter-connection between nutritional knowledge, consumerism and concerns over chronic disease in the development of the modern food consumer.

This research utilises a case-study approach for analysing the contribution of commercial enterprise to the visualisation of diet and disease risk. I focus on Unilever as a distinct example because of its position as a leading food producer in postwar Britain. Unilever was the first margarine producer to identify health as an important value added component allied to brand diversification in the postwar period. The ways Flora margarine, in particular, visually constructed the at-risk consumer merely emphasised the notion that health education was not unilateral but rather multilateral. This approach ensured that consumers were informed in non-traditional ways as distinct from those attempts by national government.

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[128] Colin Jones and Roy Porter, 'Introduction', in *Reassessing Foucault: Power, Medicine and the Body* (London: Routledge, 1994), p. 11.

A Note on Sources

My research will centre on analyses of archival, audio-visual and printed visual sources to provide wider and more in-depth understandings of the construction of the body at risk in postwar health education. To this end, the files of the Central Council for Health Education (CCHE), the Health Education Council (HEC) and the Health Education Authority (HEA) all delineate the development of nutrition as a key concern in disease prevention for health education organisations. To provide a more nuanced perspective of the evolution of a visual science-based consumerism in a British context I analyse the advertising output of Unilever P.L.C., for their Blue Band, Stork and Flora margarine brands.

Posters, leaflets, pamphlets, films and television programmes relating to nutrition and chronic disease are located in the collections of the National Archives, Wellcome Library, The Science and Society Library, the Imperial War Museum, the Museum of English Rural Life and the British Film Institute. Posters and pamphlets produced to advertise the health benefits of Flora are available from Unilever Archives, the Wellcome Library, the Museum of English Rural Life and through online copy purchase from the Advertising Archives. A Central Office of Information film together with ITV documentary programmes (analysed in Chapter Three) focus on the negative effects of unhealthy diets on disease outcomes and are available in digitised forms from the British Film Institute.

Ministry of Health (and DHSS) files, Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (and predecessors) files, Government Social Survey Department files, Ministry of Information files, Central Office of Information files, Treasury: Agriculture and Food Division files and Prime Minister’s Office files all detail government responses to the findings of nutritional scientists. Medical Research Council files illustrate the prominence that obesity, coronary heart disease, health promotion and hypertension were achieving on an international and national level throughout the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s. An analysis of nutrition commissions, the National Food Survey and nutritional reports illustrate a combination of medical, legal and lay attitudes towards diet, disease, consumerism and product choice that are central to the contextualisation of health campaigns within political and social developments. These documents provide a broader policy basis for my discussion on the creation of a science-based consumerism in the post-war period.

British national newspaper advertisements, especially those that published government campaigning materials and advertised Unilever branded margarine products, are considered. In the main this research focussed on *The Times,* the *Manchester Guardian/Observer* and the *Daily Mail*, largely because within these papers I located advertisements and images that had not been removed before digitisation. Newspaper sources are invaluable in illustrating how interpretations of diet, disease and lifestyle behaviours were constructed. Features and comment pieces in these newspapers concurrently provide criticism and praise (not necessarily in equal measure) of government policy measures and publicity schemes through editorial pieces and replies.

My major primary source base comprises those images that form an important analytical component of the thesis. I have chosen these from a large corpus of visual material produced on the subject of diet and health throughout the twentieth century. My selection has been dictated by the ephemeral nature of these sources and the extant examples available through public and private archives. Furthermore, my visual methodology necessitates the use of particular examples, not as representative, but as expressive objects that constructed and advanced specific understandings of diet and disease. These images were produced with different purposes in mind, even if together they performed other implicit functions beyond their intended use (such as reinforcing gender norms). These sources were often located in archive files loosely catalogued with other visual images on a similar theme, or within document-based policy files maintained usually by topic and time period. Apart from those produced by well-known graphic designers during the Second World War, in particular, it has been very difficult to ascertain who designed some images, who decided on their visual content or even who the publisher was. I have, wherever possible, attributed individual images to their designer when that information is known.

More generally, there is often some hesitation about what to do with governmental visual propaganda and commercial advertisements as historical sources. In particular, the 'reception problem' is repeatedly emphasised, especially as it is largely impossible to evaluate individual consumer responses to publicity pieces or advertisements. Even after the introduction of consumer surveys and other forms of examining 'success' in the postwar period, there remained a disconnect between advertisements and consumer responses. While some historians have championed an approach centred on viewing large numbers of advertisements to locate patterns that 'reflect common ways of "crafting and of seeing imagery" in a given time period', I would argue that this is reductive in that it views images merely in terms of patterns of representation – the search for a 'visual hegemony' – rather than examining advertisements as idiosyncratic cultural products that often employ disparate and unique visual formulae to 'sell' ideas, desires and lifestyles.[129] Rather than arguing for a 'visual hegemony', it is more useful to acknowledge that images emitted differing

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[129] Pamela E. Swett has argued for a search for a 'visual hegemony' by drawing parallels and similarities across a broad a sample of images as possible. See: Pamela E. Swett, *Selling Under the Swastika: Advertising and Commercial Culture in Nazi Germany* (Stanford CA: Stanford University Press, 2014), p. 7. This has been informed by David Ciarlo, *Advertising Empire: Race and Visual Culture in Imperial Germany* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2011), pp. 16-17.

overt and covert messages, themselves culturally contingent and to emphasise their subject matter or thematic structure as linking devices.

Throughout this thesis, I refer to the images as active agents in the process of meaning construction. They are seen to act in or on the viewer to elicit certain responses and are therefore often referred to throughout as the subject. This approach is adopted partly from film and cultural studies and from actor-network theory, an approach to social theory that treats objects as a part of social networks and thus as both material and semiotic.[130] Adopting a constructivist approach allows me to think about images as important representational strategies that were actively involved in constructing knowledge and meaning about diet and its relationship with health. Throughout this thesis, I argue that images have much to offer historians, demonstrating the complex visual strategies and thematic foci utilised to construct culturally contingent meanings around diet, disease and the body in Britain in the mid-late twentieth century.

Thesis Outline

The thesis is divided into four chapters, which collectively aim to capture the visualisation of food as a modern medicine during the second half of the twentieth century. In exploring this visualisation I have emphasised both the role of the body and gender in constructing food as of significant importance to public health. I have limited my project primarily to an analysis of central government health education campaigns concerning food and diet and to the advertising output of one multinational food manufacturer in particular, Unilever, focussing only on their butter substitute

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[130] See: Bruno Latour, *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), pp. 1-20. In the introduction Latour includes a summary of the development and intellectual changes ACT has undergone since the late 1980s and early 1990s.

products. I have chosen Unilever because of its position as Britain's foremost margarine manufacturer during the period under consideration and because it was the first multinational to identify health as an important unique selling point for the postwar edible fats industry. This specificity has allowed me to undertake a visual reading of the images produced by both the state and private industry to instigate behavioural change, whether persuading viewers to follow health advice or buy consumer products linked to such health guidance. Thus, the chapters in this thesis examine historical instances which use visual images, be they static or moving, in promoting a healthy eating mantra. In doing so, I emphasise the role of mass communication in analysing, regulating and reconfiguring the transient and ephemeral nature of the body, conceptualised as both at-risk and beyond the risk of disease. This visual duality between the ugly and beautiful body is explored across this thesis, assessing how, throughout the second half of the twentieth century, the body and especially the gendered body was appropriated for health education purposes. I have where possible referred to health education materials by their contemporary term such as propaganda during the war and health promotion as the 1980s progressed. I follow a largely chronological structure. Firstly, this allows me to explore in greater detail the development of particular body tropes and changing gender norms over time. Secondly, as the extant public health literature for this period remains largely centred on political or policy-based histories, my analysis rests on a series of chronological case studies. I have situated my study within this body of work, while simultaneously adding to it. Nonetheless, within each chapter I have adopted a thematic and conceptual structure that attempts to account for the visual aestheticisation of food and the body during this period, while also linking it to the development of wider public health strategies in postwar Britain.

In Chapter One I explore the wartime development of food propaganda, exploring its visual attributes as a logical starting point for later, postwar food-centred health education campaigns. This chapter alone focuses wholly on governmental food campaigns and in the main those produced by the Ministry of Food. It identifies those campaigns with both an explicit and implicit health message, suggesting that wartime developments in food propaganda were central to the development of public health interventions focussed on over-eating and nutrition during the postwar period. I argue that it was these campaigns, necessitated by the introduction of food rationing, that facilitated governmental intervention into the eating habits of the population to an unprecedented extent. Not only was the government directly controlling the supply of foodstuffs to the populace through the rationing system, it was also directing and influencing how those same foodstuffs were to be consumed. I posit that these campaigns, composed of a variety of posters and leaflets, utilised perceived gender norms as a way of informing citizens about how to engage in healthy eating at a time of significant food shortage.[131] To this end, and in line with new revisionist work on the Second World War, this chapter reassesses the myth of consensus through the lens of individualism. While individualism within the realm of medicine and health care practice has generally been perceived as a largely postwar phenomenon, closely related to the contemporaneous rise in risk-factor epidemiology, this chapter

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[131] It is worth noting that throughout the Second World War, a great many public information films and film shorts were produced and disseminated by the Ministry of Information on the subject of diet and health. While these are pertinent to my thesis, they have already been the subject of much detailed historical examination and as such have been omitted from re-examination in this thesis. This has allowed me to examine other, often-overlooked forms of visual communication including magazine advertisements and infant and maternal welfare publicity. For more on wartime films see: Boon, *Films of Fact*; Boon, ‘Health Education Films’; Tim Boon, ‘Agreement and Disagreement in the Making of *World of Plenty*’, in *Nutrition in Britain: Science, Scientists and Politics in the Twentieth Century*, ed. by David F. Smith (London: Routledge, 1997), pp. 142-165; Scott Anthony and James G. Mansell. *The Projection of Britain: A History of the GPO Film Unit* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan [for the BFI], 2011); Alan J. Harding, ‘The Closure of the Crown Film Unit in 1952: Artistic Decline or Political Machinations?’, *Contemporary British History* 18:4 (2007), pp. 22-51; Paul Swann, *The British documentary film movement , 1926-1946* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

forcefully champions the role of the individual within the wartime rhetoric around food. Not only were rations allocated on an individual basis but food propaganda also encouraged the individual to enact behaviour change. Thus, rather than seeing the postwar years as a period of departure from the wartime food and health policy environment, which is often identified as a zenith for communality, this chapter seeks to re-orientate academic work towards the pivotal role the war played in forging the figure of the individual. Through visual analysis of a selection of public information posters and leaflets this chapter establishes the relationship between the state and the individual as central to the dissemination of health education not just for 'the duration' but also for the remainder of the century.

Following on from the wartime context of rationing, food controls and limited consumption, Chapter Two adopts a dual approach to visually examining the development of health education models around food and health in the immediate postwar period. It not only examines postwar governmental initiatives, themselves largely focussed on mothers and children, but also utilises the advertising material of Unilever P.L.C.'s butter substitute products to examine how commercial entities were appropriating the emerging tenets of individualism, risk and behavioural change to sell products. I argue that during the period of decontrol (especially as the Labour government of the early postwar years had remained reluctant to continue large-scale food propaganda initiatives) commercial enterprises themselves began to play a significant role in circulating information regarding food (and later health) to the population.[132] By concentrating on the advertising output of Unilever for their Blue Band and Stork margarines in particular, this chapter examines the visualisation of certain products as new and 'modern', linking food advertising to a discourse of

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[132] Hester Vaizey, *Keep Britain Tidy and Other Posters from the Nanny State* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2014), p. 88 [pages not numbered].

modernity within consumer culture. By studying governmental and commercial initiatives in tandem, I draw important parallels, revealing a coherency between the publicity of both these public and private enterprises. In doing so, this chapter adopts an original approach to understanding the postwar development of health education. The reliance on the body and contemporary gender norms as visual markers bolster this thematic coherency within visual images, linking these campaigns not just with each other but also with wartime food propaganda campaigns. This reliance similarly reveals the postwar anxiety about the social positioning of women within a rapidly changing cultural context. Certainly, the symbiotic relationship between governmental campaigns and their commercial counterparts ensured a visual linkage that sought to influence the British public either to alter their health and eating habits or purchase products that framed themselves as new ‘modern’ projects. The later appropriation of governmental rhetoric around health and eating by Unilever marked an important development in the function of commercial enterprise in promoting health knowledge in postwar Britain.

Chapter Three explores the governmental enlistment of the beautiful body as the ideal of positive health. It exposes the function of visual images as agents of preventive health and analyses these images as distinct promoters of particular food and health behaviours. These images employed particular visual tropes, themselves arguably coded with Mulvey’s ‘*to-be-looked-at-ness’* of the body, the ‘male gaze’ and the interrelated significance of gender.[133] I explore these themes and unite them to wider changes in public health and contemporary consumer culture through an analysis of the governmental health campaign, ‘Look After Yourself’; the public

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[133] Laura Mulvey developed the idea of ‘*to-be-looked-at-ness*’ in ‘Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema’, pp. 14-30. She argued that pleasure in looking is split between the active male and the passive female. Therefore, women are both looked at and displayed, with their personal appearance coded to connote a sense of spectacle for the ‘male gaze’, or ‘*to-be-looked-at-ness*’.

information film *A Way of Life*; and the documentary television two-part programme, *Lessons from the Dead* and *Lessons for the Living*. These examples have been chosen not only because they were aimed at a population-level audience but also because these particular initiatives represented a generalist approach to health education which forcefully revealed a complex range of cultural and representational practices, operating as an important aspect of a social apparatus of popular entertainment. After all, such posters, leaflets and moving pictures aimed to move, to entertain and ultimately to construct normative understandings of the body and healthiness. I argue that by visualising health and the body in particular styles, each image in its own way contributes to the construction of new – yet often traditional – understandings of gender, food as a modern medicine, and the emergent ideology of low-fat diets. By exploring these constructions within the context of health education and new public health policies relating to food, diet and disease, I expose the differing implications such images had for men and women within the postwar context of chronic disease and risk avoidance. Thus, the chapter emphasises the multifaceted nature of image production within health education projects during this period centred on the three themes of bodily beauty (and by extension ugliness), health and fitness. These acted upon the body but with differing implications for men and women. This chapter is ultimately concerned with analysing the resultant implications.

Chapter Four builds upon the themes of the body and the ‘gaze in constructing beauty norms which are explored in Chapter Three. Moving from governmental and commercial television initiatives, which visualised the body and disease risk to inculcate behaviour change, it uses Unilever’s Flora margarine brand advertisements as a case study for examining how gendered understandings of the body were constructed in terms of health for profit. Therefore, this chapter extends the investigation of commercial advertising introduced in Chapter Two. It argues that by marketing Flora as a health product, Unilever contributed to the formalisation of a visual aesthetic itself indebted to governmental health education efforts. Advertising has all too often been overlooked within the historical study of consumer culture and this Chapter (in conjunction with Chapter Two) seeks to redress that omission. Moreover, it suggests that by utilising a health education outlook within its visual advertisements, and by later launching the Flora Information Service (later the Flora Heart Project), Unilever was committed to providing an important ancillary source of health education information to the public. While it remains impossible to ascertain how successful such a mission was in real terms, Unilever’s commitment to constructing Flora in ways analogous to government-sponsored health education initiatives suggested the growing importance of health within consumer culture. Indeed, the visual dependence on the fit, lean male body as a central sales technique revealed the emerging importance of masculinity as a gendered norm in 1970s and 1980s Britain. Yet, importantly, these images were not, as may be understood from a first glance, targeted at potential male purchasers, spurred on by a visual response to adopting new, healthier lifestyles. Instead, the advertisements were aimed directly at female purchasers *for* male consumers, an important differentiation and reflection on the still largely entrenched gendered norms of food buying in the postwar period. I propose that by relying so heavily on the male body as a chief visual trope for a product with a very specific heart health claim, these advertisements constructed specific ways of understanding food and health in relation to the body, and explore how these were diffused and popularised within consumer culture.

Ultimately, this thesis investigates the role and function of visual images produced by both the state and private industry in constructing knowledge about disease, diet and the body from the introduction of rationing until the general move away from images as centrepieces for health campaigning at a time when health promotion was gaining increased political support. While the history of 'private' and corporate health care initiatives have been overshadowed in a British situation due to the overwhelming focus on the National Health Service, such an examination facilitates an evaluation of the authority of science within 'modern' society. By focusing on the diet and disease risk in the second half of the twentieth century in a British context, this dissertation links historical approaches to advertising and the dissemination of health advice to their contemporary and shifting cultural contexts. Moreover, a rigorous assessment of how particular images and languages were used in health campaigns and advertising emphasises the development of self-care practices and risk avoidance tactics within the 'new public health' of the post-war period. Consequently this work represents a necessary scholarly enquiry into the interface between diet, chronic disease, and consumerism in mid to late twentieth century Britain.

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Constructing Healthy Eating: Visualising Diet, Gender and the Individual in Wartime Britain, 1940-1945

Figure 2.1: ‘Milk: The Backbone of Young Britain’ (TNA BN 10/216), c. 1940-1945

Sketched in pink and encompassing a bright, radiating milk bottle, the child figure in this poster 'Milk: The Backbone of Young Britain' (Figure 1.1) exemplified the apparent health benefits of milk consumption for young children. Produced for the Ministry of Food during the Second World War (and later transferred to and reproduced by the Ministry of Health during the 1950s and 1960s) it raises important questions for the historian about food, health and infant welfare in wartime and postwar Britain. Similarly, this poster reveals that issues of infant welfare, motherhood and nutrition were important concerns for the wartime government. This chapter will explore how these issues were visualised and disseminated through the Ministry of Food, closely tying femininity with food and motherhood with concerns about childhood nutrition.

Emerging in the interwar years and persisting well into the postwar period, this focus on the image of the child as a means of accessing the mother was repeatedly afforded visual primacy in health education campaigns. Indeed, the need to target the mother was a central purpose of this poster. During the interwar period motherhood was reframed ideologically as a patriotic duty with women responsible for raising the next generation of workers and soldiers.[1] An important element of this patriotic duty was ensuring that children were adequately fed and that mothers understood their important role in safeguarding infant and child development.[2] Borne in part from concerns regarding national efficiency during the First World War, motherhood and infant welfare were key concerns for government during the 1920s and 1930s.[3] In this context, medical and dietary advice was central in constructing

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[1] Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska, 'The Making of the Modern Female Body: beauty, health and fitness in interwar Britain', *Women's History Review* 20:2 (2011), pp. 299-317.

[2] See: Rima Apple, 'Constructing Mothers: Scientific Motherhood in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries', *Social History of Medicine* 8:2 (1995), pp. 161-178.

[3] See: Anna Davin, 'Imperialism and Motherhood', *History Workshop* 5 (1978), pp. 9-65; Deborah Dwork, *War is Good for Babies and Other Young Children: a history of the infant and child welfare*

mothers as responsible agents for infant wellbeing. As part of this process, infant welfare clinics were established which provided means-tested access to food supplements for poorer families during the 1930s.[4] Similarly, a health visiting service imparted advice to new mothers following the birth of their baby.[5] While these services initially suffered due in part to their uneven provision and their reliance on scarce local resources and initiatives, by the mid-1930s local government, in conjunction with voluntary organisations, provided services for mothers and infants across most of the country.[6] While health visitors and infant welfare centres were largely responsible for educating poorer women in good child-rearing practices, the middle-classes were not excluded from such services, especially as infant mortality rates improved. Indeed, the advent of the Second World War and the introduction of universal access to welfare foods for mothers and infants assured the continued design, production and dissemination of posters aimed at persuading *all* mothers to adopt particular health behaviours for their children.

Such posters can therefore be contextualised within wider histories of health and infant welfare. They revealed implicit messages about motherhood and the construction of mothering as a skill, a medicalised tool that was not innate but rather needed to be learned. In particular, as Rima Apple has demonstrated within a US context, the belief that women needed scientific and medical knowledge to raise their

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movement in England1898-1918 (London: Tavistock, 1987); Lara Marks, *Metropolitan Maternity: Maternal and Infant Welfare Services in Early Twentieth Century London* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1996). By the 1930s local government and voluntary groups were providing various services for the care of mothers and infants with the health visiting and infant welfare centres among the first and most enduring. Both increased exponentially following the First World War and by 1936, health visiting was the only service provided across all parts of the country, with infant welfare centres a close second.

[4] Marks, 'Mothers, babies and hospitals: 'The London' and the provision of maternity care in East London, 1870-1939', in *Women and Children First: International Maternal and Child Welfare, 1870-1945*, ed. by Valerie Fildes, Lara Marks and Hilary Marland (London: Routledge, 1992), pp. 48-73.

[5] For the prewar development of the health visitor see: Celia Davies, 'The Health Visitor as Mother's Friend: A Woman's Place in Public Health, 1900-14', *Social History of Medicine* 1:1 (1988), pp. 39-59.

[6] Clinics and health visitors could not provide free treatment or cash support so their services were largely confined to advice giving.

children gained increased currency during this period. Elizabeth Peretz identified similar developments in Britain at local level, with health visitors, infant welfare centres and 'mothers' meetings' all contributing to increased medical interventions for infants, while imparting nutrition, hygiene and health advice primarily to working-class women.[7] According to Anna Davin, the authority of the state over the individual, the professional over the amateur and science over tradition were all actively involved in this redefining of motherhood, which transcended class and ensured that all 'mothers of the race' would be carefully guided in raising children to adulthood.[8] This increased tendency to communicate correct mothering skills and health practices (including feeding) continued during the Second World War, gaining urgency in the context of food shortages. In this way, posters such as Figure 1.1 visualised governmental concerns regarding infant welfare while simultaneously performing a health education function. Tied as these posters were to the welfare foods scheme, they performed advertising and educative purposes in tandem with each other. Indeed, the visual promotion of images of infants and children in health campaigns for welfare foods continued well into the 1950s and early 1960s (see Chapter Two), exemplifying this trend to visualise health advice to target mothers.

Through an application of close analysis of a number of wartime and immediate postwar posters, magazine advertisements and leaflets, I will emphasise their function as not only purveyors of state-sponsored information, but also their role in coding food and health in relation to gender, the body and individual responsibility.

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[7] Elizabeth Peretz, 'Maternal and Child Welfare in England and Wales Between the Wars: A Comparative Regional Study' (unpublished doctoral thesis, Middlesex Univeristy, 1992); Elizabeth Peretz, 'The costs of modern motherhood to low income families in interwar Britain', in *Women and Children First: International Maternal and Child Welfare, 1870-1945*, ed. by Valerie Fildes, Lara Marks and Hilary Marland (London: Routledge, 1992), pp. 257-280. Interestingly, Peretz identified the importance of commerce in constructing fashions and trends in motherhood that commercial industries could capitalize on.

[8] Davin, 'Imperialism and Motherhood', p. 13.

By treating them as important forms of explicit and implicit messages, I will demonstrate that their visual components operated as more than illustrations but rather as active agents in transmitting health information, advice and cultural norms. Before I historicise those visual images used to discuss and educate the public about diet and health during a period of unprecedented state control, I will provide some brief historical background to wartime propaganda design, food austerity, communalism and the construction of gender roles.

I will then examine visual images under three main themes. Firstly I focus on a number of publicity pieces that were produced and designed to advertise welfare foods. Secondly, I analyse a selection of posters designed by well-known graphic designers to encourage individuals to grow food and eat home-grown produce. This section, in particular, employs methodologies borrowed from art history to ground the images within a wider art historical context which was rooted in European avant-garde movements. Because these artists achieved widespread recognition during their lifetime it is possible to understand their output for the Ministry of Food within the context of their graphic design career. This is productive because of the ways (unlike many visual counterparts that similarly focused on food) these artists generally adopted a gender-neutral stance in relation to food growing and food cooking, instead emphasising aesthetic elements in their designs. In contrast to this gender neutrality, I will finally examine magazine advertisements and Ministry of Food leaflets that aimed to persuade women to conform to a ‘beauty and duty’ discourse during the war. I will use these images as a new way to explore the emergence of the individual within public health discourse, suggesting that ‘reading’ these images as important forms of communication (that operated within a sophisticated visual consumer culture) can reveal new meanings. It is these meanings that this chapter will expose and contextualise to problematise and historicise images as important, and often undervalued, sources of historical evidence.[9]

Locating Wartime Propaganda for Nutrition and Health

> Housewives as a whole cannot be trusted to buy all the right things, where nutrition and health are concerned. This is really no more than the extension of the principle according to which the housewife herself would not trust the child of four to select the week's purchases. For in the case of nutrition and health, just as in the case of education, the gentleman in Whitehall really does know better what is good for people than the people know themselves.[10]

With these words, Labour politician Douglas Jay justified greater government intervention into the everyday lives of the nation. His reference to nutrition and health in conjunction with the singling out of the housewife and child are particularly pertinent in analysing government propaganda images during the war. These images emphasised mothers, children and nutritional health as key concerns of the wartime government. If, during the interwar period, posters were largely associated with the artistic practice of commercial advertising (flourishing under the patronage of major companies such as London Underground and Shell-Mex), the use of posters during the war years gave visibility to government policy.[11] Posters provided a visual rhetoric for the implementation of new and sometimes unpopular policy measures. To this end, the Ministry of Information (MOI) (1918-1919), established during the First World War, was re-established by government in 1935. The MoI, plainly aware of the power of the poster within contemporary consumer culture, consulted publicity experts at London Transport, the Post Office and Shell-Mex, amongst others,

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[9] This approach is particularly indebted to the work of Ludmilla Jordanova. See: Ludmilla Jordanova, *Sexual Visions: Image of gender in science and medicine between the eighteenth and twentieth centuries* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989); Ludmilla Jordanova, 'Medicine and Visual Culture' *Social History of Medicine* 3:1 (1990), pp. 89-99; Ludmilla Jordanova, *The Look of the Past: Visual and Material Evidence in Historical Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

[10] Douglas Jay, *The Socialist Case* (London: Faber and Faber, 1937), pp. 316-317.

[11] David Matless, 'Ages of English Design: Preservation, Modernism and Tales of their History, 1926-1939', *Journal of Design History* 3:4 (1990), pp. 203-212; John Hewitt, 'The 'Nature' and 'Art' of Shell Advertising in the Early 1930s', *Journal of Design History* 5:2 (1992), pp. 121-139.

regarding poster design.[12] Sensitive to allegations that its propagandist brief was akin to Nazi publicity efforts, the Ministry of Information gave considerable autonomy to both commercial advertisers and graphic designers to produce government information posters.[13] James Aulich, Bex Lewis and David Bownes have all identified the importance of graphic design to the varied production of public information posters during the war.[14] The artistic techniques of surrealism, photomontage, objective realism and formal design in various combinations created new ways of viewing and consuming information while a variety of slogans pervaded wartime culture. In this way, posters performed an important role in coding wartime measures that limited individual access to goods and services as patriotic, essential components of the war effort, akin to national pride. As surmised by Hester Vaizey, during the Second World War the government utilised posters to promote the mobilisation of the nation with patriotism and a sense of duty 'holding the home front together'.[15] In this way, the government exploited the rhetorical power of posters to not only inform the public, but also to promote patriotism, support for the war effort and to foster personal conceptions of 'duty' as they related to home front.

Throughout the 1940s and 1950s, government sponsored public information posters, leaflets and documentary films proliferated as the government examined different ways of keeping citizens informed, imparting advice and raising morale.[16]

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[12] Bex Lewis and David Bownes, 'Underground Posters in Wartime', in *London Transport Posters: A Century of Art and Design*, ed. by David Bownes and Oliver Green (London: Lund Humphries in association with the London Transport Museum, 2008), pp. 167-188.

[13] Aulich, *War Posters*, p. 162.

[14] Aulich, *War Posters*, pp. 162-169; Lewis and Bownes, 'Underground Posters in Wartime', pp. 167-188. Note: Poster production en masse was subject to shortages of paper, ink and - following the relocation of many European designers to America in the early months of the War - designers, all of which caused initial problems.

[15] Hester Vaizey, *Keep Britain Tidy and Other Posters from the Nanny State* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2014), p. 88 (pages not numbered).

[16] For historical research on wartime propaganda and documentary films see: Boon, *Films of Fact: A History of Science in Documentary Films and Television*, (London: Wallflower, 2007); Tim Boon, 'Health Education Films in Britain, 1919-1939: production, genres and audience', in *Signs of Life:*

To these ends, the government and its poster designers created pictorial advertisements designed to inform as well as conceptualise and depict the public in idealised and oftentimes romanticised ways.[17] The campaigns involved advancing a patriotic belief in the war effort while instructing viewers to radically alter their lifestyles in the pursuit of such beliefs. During the Second World War, posters in particular assumed an important position within the governmental machinery of the war effort. They encouraged health and safety at work, at home and in the blackout. They advocated food hygiene, growing your own food, changing diets, availing of welfare foods, practicing safe sex, lending and not buying, working harder and to a higher standard than ever before and investing in a bright and improved common future. Posters occupied an unparalleled position within the urban British landscape, visualising dominant cultural values and forwarding the illusion of a common reality.[18] They were part of a ubiquitous popular cultural landscape that helped reveal the relationship between the government, advertising and the general public. As Aulich maintained, wartime posters were not one-dimensional windows onto the world, but rather contained implicit and culturally contingent messages, themselves exposing the inextricable links between the government, commerce and the viewer.[19]

In addressing the wartime poster, I emphasise not so much trends in art and design (although they are part of this narrative), but rather how the poster is both a product of and a producer for understanding food and diet as cultural symbols. In

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Cinema and Medicine, ed. by Graeme Harper and Andrew Moor (London: Wallflower Press, 2005); Tim Boon, ‘Agreement and Disagreement in the Making of *World of Plenty*’, in *Nutrition in Britain: Science, Scientists and Politics in the Twentieth Century*, ed. by David F. Smith (London: Routledge, 1997), pp. 142-165; Scott Anthony and James G. Mansell. *The Projection of Britain: A History of the GPO Film Unit* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan [for the BFI], 2011); Alan J. Harding, ‘The Closure of the Crown Film Unit in 1952: Artistic Decline or Political Machinations?’, *Contemporary British History* 18:4 (2007), pp. 22-51; Paul Swann, *The British documentary film movement , 1926-1946* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

[17] See: James Aulich, *War Posters: Weapons of Mass Communication* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2007).

[18] Aulich, *War Posters*, p. 167.

[19] Aulich, *War Posters*, pp. 12-13.

doing so I emphasise the role of gender as a recurring visual theme to unpack how social and cultural norms were constructed and coded within food and diet campaigning. The production of these posters for welfare foods, for growing food, and for eating food during the Second World War was significant for appreciating how food and diet were co-opted by the food industry in the postwar years for economic gain. They were similarly important for understanding how the government re-identified food as an important element in explaining diet and chronic disease risk. They established how images about food and diet were normalised during the wartime period. State control of the food supply coupled with widespread rationing justified the large-scale production of visual publicity that advised citizens on what foods to eat, grow, and cook alongside the importance of milk, orange juice and cod liver oil to the growth and development of infants. Such posters functioned as educational tools at national level and as such were important artefacts in understanding the ways in which government visualised and promoted both health and produce during the war. The contextualisation of such images reveals points of continuity and difference between the construction of women, gender and the body and their postwar utilisation as techniques for 'selling' health.

Situating Food Rationing and the Impact of Austerity

Rationing and austerity occupied a central position within the collective memory of the Second World War and were important contextual factors in analysing the variety of visual material produced to advise citizens on food consumption and diet.[20] During this period, the regulation of consumption became a major component of the relationship between the state and the public. Consequently, issues of consumption

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[20] In particular, see: Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska, *Austerity in Britain: Rationing, Controls and Consumption 1939-1955* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).

quickly became important features of governmental propaganda campaigns. Such campaigns often employed gender as a visual trope. Women's association with household tasks and their identification with full-time housewifery ensured that their responsibility for household management was closely allied to issues of consumption in wartime propaganda.[21] As Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska demonstrated more generally, this shift to state control was not a gender-neutral process but rather one in which men and women responded very differently to the reduction in consumption brought about by rationing.[22] Women, with their role as housewives and mothers, were primarily affected by the continuation and later extension of austerity policies, and bore much of the responsibility for implementing these strategies in the localised context of the home.[23] Being responsible for managing the household, family shopping and the provision of daily meals, they were often at the forefront of austerity measures on food, clothing, cosmetics and a variety of miscellaneous consumer goods, from matches and lighters to toilet paper and toothbrushes. They consequently carried the unequal burden of translating these policies into not only nutritional meals for their families, but also the continuance of ordinary civilian life. It is therefore perhaps unsurprising that much governmental information that conveyed advice about

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[21] For more on the identification of women with full-time housewifery in twentieth century Britain see: Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska, 'Housewifery', in *Women in Twentieth Century Britain*, ed. by Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska (Harlow: Pearson Education, 2001), pp.149-164.

[22] Zweiniger-Bargielowska, *Austerity in Britain*, p. 1.

[23] Dissatisfaction with continued austerity and the postwar extension of rationing to bread in conjunction with the Conservatives critique of continued austerity policies was instrumental to their victory in the elections of 1951 and 1955. See: Zweiniger-Bargielowska, *Austerity in Britain*, p. 2; James Hinton, 'Militant Housewives: the British Housewives' League and the Attlee Government', *History Workshop Journal* 38:1 (1994), pp. 129-156; Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska, 'Rationing, austerity and the Conservative Party recovery after 1945', *The Historical Journal* 37:1 (1994), pp. 173-197; Joe Moran, 'Queuing up in Post-War Britain', *Twentieth Century British History* 16:3 (2005), pp. 283-305.

food and diet targeted women and regarded their role on the home front as an important mobilisation of manpower and an essential element of the war effort.[24]

During the war, civilian consumption of food, clothing, fuel and other goods was dramatically reduced as all available resources were rerouted into the war effort. This proved a formidable administrative task for the Board of Trade (Defence Plans) Department, which instigated a commodity control policy following the outbreak of war.[25] This strategy was itself formulated during the mid-1930s and was shaped by experience during the First World War and the opinions of pre-war planners.[26] Ration books were issued after a National Registration Programme in September 1939, but rationing itself did not begin until January 1940. This policy set flat-rate individual rations on a universal basis and secured the continued supply of 'buffer foods', such as non-rationed bread and potatoes alongside British Restaurant or Factory canteen meals, in order to ensure that general energy requirements were met. The later introduction of a points rationing programme in December 1941, which covered processed foods (canned meat, fruit and vegetables, biscuits, cereal products, etc.) without involving registration, invigorated consumer purchasing power.[27] Indeed, Richard Farmer has suggested that much food publicity produced by the MoF during the war recognised and acknowledged the position of British consumers as central components of the war effort rather than merely adjunct participants.[28]

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[24] I am referring here specifically to those posters and information leaflets that focused on health and food. Many other posters produced by the Ministry of Information as well as a variety of government departments did not have a gender bias in their targeting and others that did often targeted men, or women and men. For more on the content analyses of some governmental propaganda posters produced during the war, see: Rebecca Lewis, 'The Planning, Design and Reception of British Home Front Propaganda Posters of the Second World War' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University College Winchester, 2004).

[25] TNA, MAF 72/534, 'Board of Trade (Defence Plans) Department: Note', 20 February 1937.

[26] Zweiniger-Bargielowska, *Austerity in Britain,* pp. 14-15.

[27] This system was partly facilitated by lend-lease imports introduced in 1941.

[28] Richard Farmer, *The Food Companions: cinema and consumption in wartime Britain, 1939-1945* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2011), p. 33.

The introduction of food rationing was complemented by the state control of production and supply alongside an administration that incorporated both business expertise and the public through the establishment of local food control committees nationwide.[29] In this way, the wartime food policy was governed not just by nutritional requirements but also by economic factors such as a reduction in imports brought about by the shipping shortage and anti-inflationary policy.[30] Agriculture became completely subsumed within the state system and specific shopkeepers and grocers were appointed to distribute food to those registered members of the public who held ration books. This total control of food in Britain gave the state unprecedented authority over the consumption patterns of the population while simultaneously representing a major turning point in the history of the British diet.

Prior to the war, food and diet were important battlegrounds for the government in Britain. Large sections of the population experienced problems of under-nutrition, principally caused by economic recession and high levels of unemployment during the 1930s. Within this context, the matter of nutritional deficiency and food availability to the poor became a politicised issue. This prompted an extensive contemporary literature critical of government policies.[31] Misplaced optimism within the Ministry of Health about improvements in population level health was offset by this growing literature highlighting the health disparities between

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[29] Matthew Hilton, *Consumerism in Twentieth Century Britain: The search for a historical movement* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 140.

[30] John Burnett, *Plenty and Want: A Social History of Diet in England from 1815 to the Present Day* (London: Methuen, 1979), pp. 322-332; Derek, Oddy, *From Plain Fare to Fusion Food: British Diet from the 1890s to the 1990s* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2003), pp. 133-166. Also R. J Hammond, *Food, vol. I, II, III* (London: HMSO, 1951, 1956, 1962) provides a full account of wartime food policy in Britain.

[31] For example Allan Hunt, *The Condition of the Working Class in England* (London: M Lawrence Ltd., 1933) and John Boyd Orr, *Food, Health and Income: Report on a Survey of Adequacy of Diet in relation to Income* (London: Macmillan and co. Ltd., 1936).

rich and poor.[32] The historical debate surrounding the 'healthy or hungry thirties' raised questions about whether governmental policies in the interwar period were contributory to widespread malnutrition. Within this historiographical discussion, Charles Webster had emphasised the importance of the central–local government relationship, in conjunction with the power of senior officials, in assessing health standards nationally during the interwar years.[33] He argued that falling infant mortality rates were responsible for masking regional and local disparities while instead accentuating class difference, especially where the effects of unemployment impacted on nutritional intake. More recently, Alysa Levene, Martin Powell and John Stewart have analysed expenditure on public health at a local level and revealed that some areas actually increased health spending during the interwar years.[34] Similarly, Martin Gorsky analysed the impact of public leadership at local level on the success or failure of public health in the interwar period, and the influence of the Medical Officer of Health and local officials.[35] Yet the high levels of childhood rickets, a preventable disease of malnutrition amongst the urban poor, emblematised the failings of the Ministry of Health to enact change at national level.[36] Rickets was subject to repeated parliamentary debate and the attention paid to the disease by wartime planners further revealed its importance as an indicator of modernity to contemporary

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[32] For example Le Gross Clark and R. M. Titmuss, *Our Food Problem* (London: Penguin Books, 1939) and see above: footnote 31.

[33] Charles Webster, 'Healthy or Hungry Thirties?', *History Workshop Journal* 13 (1982), pp. 110-129; Charles Webster, 'Health, welfare and unemployment during the Depression', *Past and Present* 109 (1985), pp. 204-230.

[34] Alysa Levene, Martin Powell and John Stewart, 'Patterns of municipal health expenditure in interwar England and Wales', *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 78:3 (2004), pp. 635-669.

[35] Martin Gorsky, 'Public Health in interwar England and Wales: did it fail?', *Dynamis* 28 (2008), pp. 175-198.

[36] See: Roberta Bivins, '"The English Disease" or "Asian Rickets"?: Medical Responses to Postcolonial Immigration', *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 81:3 (2007), pp. 533-568; Bivins, 'Ideology and disease identity: the politics of rickets, 1929-1982, *Medical Humanities* 40 (2014), pp. 3-10.

commentators.[37] However, only the onset of war provided the necessary impetus for the direct involvement of central government agencies to examine the cooking and eating practices of the poor. This shift, with a substantial emphasis on health, represented a genuine commitment to combating nutritional deficiency. In the context of food shortage, it also demonstrated governmental support for nutritional education, with advice about food, nutrition and health interlaced with a variety of wider campaigning materials.[38]

The Rise of Communalism

Between 1939 and 1945, the British public was encouraged to view food consumption as an essential feature of the war effort. By adopting a largely visual and illustrative format, both general information campaigns and single-issue initiatives served to present a very particular representation of the home front. The wartime depiction of food on the 'Kitchen Front' as an extension of this home front rhetoric is of considerable historical importance in understanding the broader development of nutrition health campaigns in Britain during the second half of the twentieth century. It established state intervention over the eating habits of the nation as an acceptable function of central government. This 'Kitchen Front' (a name borrowed from the daily BBC radio programme launched in June 1940), was concerned with informing housewives about how to manage the household during extensive rationing.[39]

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[37] Cyril Garbett, 'Food and Health', *House of Lords Official Report* (18 March 1936), cols 59-101; Alfred Salter, *Unemployment Bill: House of Commons Official Report* (6 December 1933), cols 1499-1623; Thomas Johnston, 'Malnutrition', *House of Commons Official Report* (8 July 1936), cols 1229-1349; William M. Frazer, 'Effect of Rationing on Nutrition in Great Britain During the War', *Journal of School Health* 13:1 (1943), pp. 18-21.

[38] Webster, 'Health, Welfare and Unemployment', p. 229; Anne Murcott, 'Food and nutrition in post-war Britain', in *Understanding Post-War British Society*, ed. by James Obelkevich and Peter Catterall (London: Routledge, 1994), pp. 155-164.

[39] For more on the radio programme 'The Kitchen Front' see: Siân Nicholas, *The Echo of War: Home Front propaganda and the wartime BBC, 1939-1945* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996), pp. 70-107.

Food rationing allowed the government to mediate food and nutrition both conceptually and in practice. As suggested by Richard Farmer, Britons came to construct their own identity in part through reference to this link between the individual as consumer and the state as provider.[40] I further argue that by building a uniform diet at a national level and by publicising this diet extensively in the mass media at the same time as establishing factory canteens and state-run British Restaurants nationally, the state used food to construct a sense of collectivity and communality, even if in practice individualism was still at the heart of many propaganda campaigns.[41]

Yet the individual within discourse surrounding rationing and austerity has remained largely missing or hidden in wider discussions about the myth of consensus. The understanding of wartime Britain as an era of unprecedented communality (also reflected in the propaganda campaigns of the period) constituted prominent themes in much of the historical literature of the postwar years.[42] Public officials responsible for maintaining civilian morale as well as contemporary artists, writers and film makers portrayed the nation as self-sacrificing, communal and stoic. This had a major impact on understandings of the home front that continued well into the postwar period.[43] Paul Addison identified the role of wartime propaganda in ensuring that the myth of

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[40] Farmer, *The Food Companions*, p. 3.

[41] British Restaurants were subsidised, state-run canteens that provided cheap, off-the-ration meals to the public and to urban workers whose place of employment did not have an in-house canteen.

[42] Richard M. Titmuss, *Problems of Social Policy* (London: HMSO and Longmans, Green 1950); Ernest Bevin, *The Job to be Done* (London: Heinemann, 1942); Hamilton Fyfe, *Britain's Wartime Revolution* (London: Gollancz, 1944).

[43] See: Angus Calder, *The Myth of the Blitz* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1991); Jeffrey Richards, 'National Identity in British Wartime Films', in *Britain and the Cinema in the Second World War*, ed. by Philip M. Taylor (London: Macmillan, 1988). Richards argued that in every wartime film humour, tolerance and emotional restraint was portrayed as a central component of the national character, p. 58. Recently, Ken Loach's documentary *The Spirit of '45* has reinforced this myth of a collective community during the war and postwar years.

the 'people's war' lived on in the cultural imagination of the postwar years.[44] Historians writing both during and after the war reaffirmed this image of the Second World War as communal, linking it to the establishment of the welfare state, the introduction of Keynesian economic policies and a period of unprecedented social and moral commonality.[45] This sense of a public collective was equally tangible within the realm of food during the war.[46] Indeed, the wartime system of food rationing was viewed by the official historian, R. J. Hammond, as instigating a 'revolution in the attitude of the state to the feeding of its citizens'.[47] Richard Titmuss similarly highlighted that the government was no longer perceived as the guarantor of private freedom and the provider of stigmatised poor relief alone. Instead, the war contributed to the understanding that it had an obligation to provide welfare functions not only to the poor but to all members of society.[48]

This wartime and immediate postwar emphasis on the political or 'progressive' elements of the war has since been subject to historical revision.[49] Angus Calder's seminal work, *The People's War*, drew attention to hitherto overlooked components of social life during wartime Britain. He highlighted the:

> panic and defeatism after big air raids; looting of bombed premises; crime and blackmarketeering; evasion of evacuation billeting obligations; class war and town versus country attitudes in the reception areas for evacuees; strikes,

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[44] Paul Addison, 'Churchill and the Price of Victory: 1939-1945', in *From Blitz to Blair: A New History of Britain since 1939*, ed. by Nick Tiratsoo (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1997), pp. 68.
[45] For example: Bevin, *The Job to be Done*; Fyfe, *Britain's Wartime Revolution*; R. J. Hammond, *Food: Vol 1*; Charles Feinstein, *The Managed Economy: Essays in British Economic Policy and Performance since 1929* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983); Titmuss, *Problems of Social Policy*.
[46] Some historians have argued that the continued implementation of food rationing policies by the postwar Labour government was responsible for a change in public opinion critical of continued austerity measures. See: Hinton, 'Militant Housewives'.
[47] Hammond, *Food*, pp. 353-359.
[48] Titmuss, *Problems of Social Policy*, pp. 506-508.
[49] Paul Addison, *The Road to 1945: British Politics and the Second World War* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1975); Paul Addison, 'The Road from 1945', in *Ruling Performance: British Government from Attlee to Thatcher*, ed. by Peter Hennessy and Anthony Seldon (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988); Anthony Seldon, *Churchill's Indian Summer: The Conservative Government, 1951-1955* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1981); Keith Middlemas, *Power, Competition and the State, vol. 1: Britain in Search of Balance, 1940-1961 (*Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1986); Harriet Jones and Michael Kandiah, *The Myth of Consensus: New Views on British History, 1945-1964* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1996).

> absenteeism and low productivity in industry; hostility towards refugees and ethnic minorities.[50]

These serve as indicators that the relationship between individuals and the war effort was not wholly consensual and despite the best efforts of politicians and publicists to present British citizens as one people, the reality was often quite different.[51] Lucy Noakes has suggested that this was a period when citizens understood themselves in relation to the war and therefore perceived themselves as communal, regardless of the reality. Their 'lives *seemed* to be a "part of history", a time when they were living through momentous events'.[52] Sonya Rose has developed this theme of partial and contested national belonging, exposing both those who were included and those who were excluded within this particular construction of the British nation. She laid bare the multiple and contradictory understandings of citizenship circulating in wartime Britain and emphasised the fragility of national identity during a period when wartime depictions of Britishness appeared to be particularly homogenous.[53] In doing so, Rose complicated understandings of nationhood, national identity and the meanings of citizenship while elevating the role of class, gender, morality and regional differences. Certainly, the wide remembrance of the war as a 'people's war', which involved shared effort and sacrifice across the population has been complicated by works such as these, providing a more nuanced and balanced understanding of war and the home front. In contrast, Paul Addison has warned that the new focus on the negatives conveys a skewed perception of the multifaceted relationship between state and

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[50] As cited in Robert MacKay, *Half the Battle: Civilian Morale in Britain during the Second World War* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002), p. 5

[51] MacKay, *Half the* Battle, p. 5. See also: Angus Calder, *The People's War: Britain 1939-1945* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1969).

[52] Noakes, *War and the British*, p. 3. [Italics added for emphasis by this author].

[53] Rose, *Which People's War?,* (particularly chapter four), pp. 107-150.

citizen, soldier and civilian and the community with the individual.[54] Most violations and evasions of the regulations and restrictions governing civilian life were petty and implied no major dissent from the actual war effort.[55] He suggested perhaps that the best measure of social solidarity was the general acceptance of the unprecedented level of state control implemented and the general surrender of personal freedoms.[56]

Because of these shifts in the historical narrative, wartime food policy is likewise no longer perceived as a one-dimensional response to market changes centred on equal opportunity to limited resources. Instead, food policy has come under scrutiny as an issue that was more multi-faceted and complicated in relation to 'fair share', egalitarian ideals. The links between rationing and the maintenance of civilian health, and the correlation of wartime morale with the 'people's war' have been subject to reinvestigation.[57] Food reflected the state's concern with both individual choice and the maintenance of community spirit on a national scale.[58] Zweiniger-Bargielowska outlined how rationing, in conjunction with price controls and subsidies succeeded, to some certain extent, in ensuring that consumption was more evenly distributed amongst all income groups but only when coupled with full employment and high taxes.[59] For many on the political Left, the controls introduced during the war represented important examples of socialist policies in action.

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[54] Paul Addison, 'The Impact of the Second World War', in *A Companion to Contemporary Britain, 1939-2000*, ed. by Paul Addison and Harriet Jones (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), p. 6.

[55] Addison, 'The Impact of the Second World War', p. 6.

[56] Addison, 'The Impact of the Second World War', p. 6.

[57] Arthur Marwick, *Britain in the Century of Total War* (London, 1968) Angus Calder, *The People's War: Britain 1939-1945* (London, 1969); Mackay, *Half the Battle*; Harold L. Smith, *Britain in the Second World War: A Social History* (Manchester, 1996); Zweiniger-Bargielowska, *Austerity in Britain*; Mark Roodhouse, 'Popular Morality and the Black Market in Britain', 1939-1955, in Frank Trentmann and Flemming Just (eds), *Food and Conflict in Europe in the Age of the Two World Wars* (Basingstoke, 2006), pp. 243-265.

[58] The Wartime Social Survey and the Family Food Survey are two important examples of a burgeoning interest in social surveys that monitored acceptance of and satisfaction with austerity measures. TNA, RG23/18, 'Food: A collection of short reports on food schemes, publicity and shopping and food shortages', 1942-1943. See also: TNA MAF 156/396 and TNA MAF 156/397 'The Family Food Survey', 1941-1947.

[59] Zweiniger-Bargielowska, *Austerity in Britain*, p. 1.

Consequently, large swathes of the labour movement supported the state management of a controlled economy. This move towards greater equality certainly contributed to the myth of the united home front and both poster designers and producers promoted patriotic and dutiful conceptions of wartime society as a call to action, and persuaded citizens to radically alter their lives for the benefit of the war. In this way, austerity appropriated positive characteristics to enlist citizens into a communal interpretation of society.

During the war the public was bombarded with governmental publicity. Food has long been understood as a site that generated massive public support and even a cursory glance at the Wartime Social Survey (conducted throughout the war on a variety of topics by the Ministry of Information) suggests almost universal support for food control.[60] In one survey conducted from May 1942 until March 1943, which was concerned with ascertaining public opinion pertaining to food, just over ninety per cent of those interviewed approved of rationing as a fair way of distributing limited resources.[61] While it is difficult to extend these relatively small-scale survey results to larger swathes of the population, they remain important indicators within the broader context for which they were utilised. These surveys were significant because they were perceived by the state as fundamental in gauging general responses to rationing and food controls.[62] They represented the first centralised attempts to measure British public opinion in relation to food, nutrition and health, which later became an increasingly sophisticated form of measurement in the post-war period.[63] This type of

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[60] TNA, RG23/15 'Food: A survey of meals taken and attitudes towards wartime food among groups of housewives, schoolchildren and industrial workers, for the Ministry of Food, 1942.

[61] TNA, RG23/18 'Food: A collection of short reports on food schemes, publicity and shopping and food shortages', 1942-1943.

[62] See: Laura Dumond Beers, 'Whose Opinion?: Changing Attitudes Towards Opinion Polling in British Politics, 1937-1964', *Twentieth Century British History* 17:2 (2006), pp. 177-205.

[63] For the postwar period see Mike Savage's work on the sample survey in Savage, *Identities and Social Change in Britain since 1940: The Politics of Method* (Oxford and New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2010), pp. 187-214.

information gathering proved influential specifically within policy-making circles and the MoF in particular utilised the results as a litmus test for compliance and consent within the realm of food control, nutritional propaganda and shopping shortages. Ultimately these surveys also targeted the individual respondent, emphasising the complex relationship between the individual as consumer and the perception of communalism and the 'common good' promoted through propaganda.

Analysing the visual component of governmental publicity campaigns complicates the narrative of collectiveness and communality through repeated reference to the individual. It was the individual who was usually the first point of contact, with communities very seldom identified by government propaganda. Indeed, the very system of rationing introduced in January 1940 distributed goods on individual, not familial, bases. Thus, from the start of the war, the individual was reconceptualised within British society – elevating its role to one of dutiful citizen, capable of withstanding great consumerist shortages and maintaining morale for the good of the imagined 'home front'. In the quest 'to feed a family of 45,000,000' the individual was identified as the key agent for instigating large scale changes to the relationship between the state, the consumer and food.

Gender in Wartime

The war in Britain was also marked by a number of distinct social changes. In particular, gender roles underwent major shifts with the movement of large numbers of women both into the forces and into a wide range of occupations, many of which had previously been regarded as the preserve of men. Lucy Noakes suggested that this rapid shift in gender roles, rationalised as wartime duties expected of women, were not necessarily changes that were universally accepted.[64] She connected this development with the governmental mobilisation of a shared national identity in wartime Britain, identifying the importance of ideas of active citizenship to constructing public gender roles. Certainly, the position of women changed markedly during the war. The introduction of national service for women from April 1941 fostered contemporary concerns about the possibility of the masculinisation of women and the diminution of wife and mother-centred female roles.[65] The print media publicised discussions about the possibility that women, and their position within a hierarchical society, would be irrevocably transformed by the wartime requirement for female workers.[66] Governmental publicity therefore attempted to bridge normative female behaviours – homework and motherhood – with new femininities for working women. This was especially notable as contemporary concerns about the gender-specific societal role of women within the family coupled with the negative impact of wartime female employment gained national exposure. In this context, food was one important site upon which issues of femininity, gender roles and domesticity were discussed, portrayed and disseminated. It was therefore perhaps unsurprising that representations of women in much food and health publicity combined ideas of femininity, beauty and motherhood with those of active citizenship and patriotic commitment to the war effort for the 'duration'.

Within the wartime construction of gender roles, women as mothers and their social role within the family was repeatedly emphasised. Many of the images

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[64] Lucy Noakes, *War and the British: Gender, Memory and National Identity* (London and New York: I. B. Tauris, 1998), p. 48.

[65] TNA, INF 1/292. For more see: Rose, *Which People's War?*, pp. 107-150; Penny Summerfield and Corinna Penniston-Bird, 'Women in the Firing Line: The Home Guard and the Defense of Gender Boundaries in Britain in the Second World War', *Women's History Review* 9 (2000), pp. 231-255.

[66] For example: 'Hand Over the Babies', *Woman's Own*, 24 March 1944, p. 7; 'More Neglected Children', *Leicester Evening Mail*, 15 May 1943; 'Girls May Not Quit War Jobs', *Daily Mail*, 25 August 1941, as cited in Rose, *Which People's War?,* p. 199.

discussed in this chapter reference this maternal duty to avail of welfare supplements, thereby providing important health giving foods to infants and children. While such images were aimed at all classes, Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska has outlined how the consumption of vitamin supplements was significantly higher among the middle classes than among the working classes.[67] In this respect, by advertising welfare foods and targeting the mother, propaganda attempted to persuade those not already doing so (often working class mothers) to avail of the scheme and use vitamin allowances.

The Ministry of Food was proud that it succeeded in maintaining the 'general health of the civilian' throughout the war and that the 'fitness of babies and school children was particularly striking'.[68] The Wartime Social Survey revealed that, in general, citizens considered themselves to be well fed despite the dramatic reduction in food imports and food choice.[69] However, the continuation of rationing and systems of control, while functioning satisfactorily during the war itself, were difficult to sustain in peacetime. When ration levels of proteins and fats dropped below wartime levels, it undermined public faith in the adequacy of the national diet.[70] Thus, food policy became a contentious issue of public debate in the immediate postwar years and housewives in particular emerged as the most dissatisfied social group.[71] Nevertheless the development of a comprehensive national food policy through rationing, food subsidies and increased consumption of previously unpopular foodstuffs, such as brown bread, radically changed the British diet. The substantial class and income differences in food consumption that had dogged the interwar period

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[67] TNA, MAF 101/521, 'Wartime Social Survey: An Inquiry for the Ministry of Food into the Use of Fruit Juice and Cod-liver Oil', 1944.

[68] Ministry of Food, *How Britain was Fed in War Time: Food Control 1939-1945* (London: HMSO, 1946), pp. 1 and 120-121.

[69] TNA MAF 156/397 'The Family Food Survey', 1941-1947.

[70] Zweiniger-Bargielowska, 'Bread Rationing in Britain, July 1946-July 1948', *Twentieth Century British History* 4:1 (1993), pp. 57-85; Jose Harris, 'War and Social History: Britain and the Home Front during the Second World War', *Contemporary European History* 1 (1992), pp. 17-35.

[71] Hinton, 'Militant Housewives', pp. 129-156.

were greatly reduced.[72] The targeting of vulnerable groups such as pregnant and nursing women and children, in conjunction with rationing and full employment, yielded marked improvements in public health.[73] While food consumption was never genuinely equal and disparities between the highest and lowest income groups remained, the contemporary perception of the food policy as fair achieved currency during the war years.[74] In this way, rationing, austerity and the idea of 'fair shares' became essential components of postwar reconstruction. Their centrality to wartime propaganda and to Labour's postwar commitment to constructing a welfare state ensured that notions of fairness, communality and active citizenship pervaded the postwar settlement.

'Calling All Mothers': Welfare Foods, Infant Health and Maternal Duty

Throughout the war, a variety of governmental publicity material attempted to construct women as mothers in relation to the health and eating habits of their children. Within this context, the Ministry of Food, in conjunction with the Ministry of Education, identified particular foodstuffs as essential to the growth and development of infants and children.[75]

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[72] Derek Oddy and Derek Miller, *The Making of the Modern British Diet* (London: Rowman & Littlefield, 1976); Derek Oddy, *From Plain Fare to Fusion Food: British diet from the 1890s to the 1990s* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2003);

[73] Zweiniger-Bargielowska, *Austerity in Britain*, pp. 44-45.

[74] Ministry of Health, *On the State of the Public Health during Six Years of War: Report of the Chief Medical Officer of the M.O.H., 1939-45*, (London: HMSO, 1946); Paul Brassley and Angela Potter, 'A View from the Top: Social Elites and Food Consumption in Britain 1930s-1940s', in *Food and Conflict in Europe in the Age of the Two World Wars,* ed. by Frank Trentmann and Flemming Just (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), pp. 223-242.

[75] TNA, MAF 83/2747, 'Food Education', 1943; TNA, MH 55/1552, 'Welfare Food: progress of scheme; difficulties', 1942-1947.

Figure 1.1 (repeat): 'Milk: The Backbone of Young Britain' (TNA BN 10/216), c. 1940-1945

'Milk: The Backbone of Young Britain' (Figure 1.1) established the important role the provision of milk played within wartime publicity concerning the child. From the 1920s, 'clean milk' had been promoted as an essential food.[76] The National Milk Publicity Council was largely responsible for the branding of milk as a source of strength vital for men, women and particularly, children.[77] As Frank Trentmann

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[76] The infant milk depot movement was the first formalised effort to provide a source for 'clean milk' especially aimed at mothers and infants. For more on the relationship between clean milk and infant welfare in the early twentieth century see: Deborah Dwork, 'The Milk Option: An Aspect of the History of the Infant Welfare Movement in England 1898-1908', *Medical History* 31 (1987), pp. 51-69; Keir Waddington, *The Bovine Scourge: Meat, Tuberculosis and Public Health, 1850-1914* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2006), pp. 175-191.

[77] Frank Trentmann, *Free Trade Nation: Commerce, Consumption and Civil Society in Britain* (Oxford, 2008), p. 221. The National Milk Publicity Council was established in 1920 to promote milk as a healthful component of the diet. It was involved in dairy marketing, education programmes and liasing with industry. It later became the National Dairy Council and is now called the Dairy Council. One of its most successful (and memorable) education slogans was the 'Drinka Pinta Milka Day'

demonstrated, from the mid-1920s the milk industry itself campaigned for Milk Weeks, Health Weeks and Milk Clubs, particularly in factories, in addition to organising public lectures on nutrition.[78] Emerging from scandals surrounding contaminated milk in the early twentieth century, the dairy industry used such campaigns to re-orientate milk consumption as clean, pure and most importantly, healthy. Trentmann argued that Milk Weeks in particular transformed the public visibility of milk, establishing it as a national necessity that compelled the state to provide for its milk-consuming citizens.[79] This state provision of milk during the interwar years focused on schemes for providing free and subsidised milk in schools.[80] The launch of the Milk in School Scheme (MISS) in October 1934 provided half-price milk to over two and a half million children across England and Wales. However, numerous attempts by the Ministry of Health to extend the services of MISS to mothers and infant children between 1934 and 1936 were met with resistance from the Exchequer. Progressive attempts by the Milk Reorganisation Commission (which later influenced a White Paper) to extend welfare milk were similarly unsuccessful. But the outbreak of war and the later introduction of rationing in January 1940 provided the necessary impetus for governmental involvement in infant and child feeding schemes en masse.

At this time milk was not the only product marketed as healthy and essential for children. The contemporary focus in nutrition science emphasised eradicating

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during the 1950s. See: Alan Jenkins, *Drinka Pinta: The Story of Milk and the Industry that Serves It* (London: Heinemann, 1970). See also: TNA ED 50/79, 'Milk: Cooperation with the Ministry of Health, Grades of milk, Proposed Scottish bill, National Milk Publicity Council's milk schemes, cooperation of local education authorities', 1920-1931.

[78] Frank Trentmann, 'Bread, Milk and Democracy consumption and citizenship in twentieth century Britain', in *The Politics of Consumption: material culture and citizenship in Europe and America*, ed. by Martin Daunton and Matthew Hilton (Oxford: Berg, 2001), pp. 129-163.

[79] Trentmann, *Free Trade Nation*, p. 221.

[80] Webster, 'Government Policy on School Meals and Welfare Foods, 1939-1970' in *Nutrition in Britain: Science, scientists and politics in the twentieth century*, ed. by David F Smith (London: Routledge, 1997), pp. 190-191.

deficiency diseases, and especially rickets in Britain. Therefore, vitamin science was increasingly important, not just from a consumerist or industrial viewpoint, but also from a nutritional perspective.[81] It proved that fat-soluble vitamin D, found in large quantities in cod liver oil, exerted curative effects on rickets. Resultantly, medical professionals called for the prophylactic use of cod liver oil for all children, and especially infants regardless of whether they were breast or bottle-fed.[82] Feeding into the 'hungry or healthy thirties' debate, during the interwar years a series of pressure groups were increasingly successful at highlighting governmental neglect regarding nutritional supplementation. Their success was largely due to their ability to unite social activists, medical practitioners and scientists, who all sought to emphasise the scale of national malnutrition.[83] Combined with pressing national efficiency issues and highlighted by large-scale conscription, the state was increasingly committed to the provision of foodstuffs, and particularly milk, which were perceived to have health-inducing benefits. Therefore the emergence of welfare feeding was rooted in the need to reduce malnutrition and inefficiency in the population that focussed on the young, especially as a plethora of pressure groups and social research findings repeatedly publicised the argued 'scale of the nutrition problem'.[84]

Heightened attention to milk continued into the 1930s and at the outbreak of war, the Ministry of Food maintained its commitment to provide milk (along with cod liver oil and orange juice) to children.[85] To publicise this commitment and encourage

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[81] John Boyd Orr, an influential researcher on nutrition and poverty, supported the view that comparing dietary and economic surveys with estimates of nutritional requirements indicated that a large proportion of the population was suffering from inadequate nutrition. David F. Smith, 'Nutrition Science and the Two World Wars', David F. Smith (Ed) *Nutrition in Britain: Science, scientists and policy in the twentieth century* (London, 1997), p. 153.

[82] Rima D. Apple, *Vitamania: Vitamins in American Culture* (New Brunswick, 1996), p. 17.

[83] Webster, 'Government Policy on School Meals and Welfare Foods', p. 191.

[84] Webster, 'Government Policy on School Meals and Welfare Foods', p. 191.

[85] Those children under five years of age were entitled to seven pints of subsidised or free milk per week and those aged between five and eighteen years were entitled to three and a half pints, with this

uptake of the welfare foods scheme, the Ministry of Food produced a number of posters and explanatory leaflets outlining personal entitlements and the importance of this food to child development. As shown metaphorically in Figure 1.1, milk was portrayed as 'The Backbone of Young Britain'. This simply arranged poster adopted a clean visual image with limited accompanying text. Displaying the outline of a child against a black background, reminiscent of the schoolroom chalkboard, the poster emphasised the nutritive importance of milk to the bodily development of children. It centred on the scene of a healthy infant in pyjamas, drinking from a beaker. The choice of the chalkboard here explicitly established this poster as educative – it is a lesson in infant feeding. The act of consuming (in this case drinking milk) is visually linked with the milk bottle that fills the torso. The accompanying caption with its underlined emphasis on the word 'backbone' connected the picture with milk, calcium and its importance for bone development. The bottle is radiating blue light, referencing its health effects. Emanating from the milk bottle, it conformed to common mid-century visual tropes associated with light-therapy and the importance of sunshine for metabolising vitamin D.[86]

Since the late nineteenth century, medical practitioners had propounded the health benefits to children of blue, violet and ultraviolet light for overcoming vitamin D deficiency (linked to rickets in children).[87] While milk itself only contains trace levels of vitamin D, it is necessary for calcium absorption. The visual linkage of milk and ultraviolet light, therefore, emphasised the dual significance of calcium and

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reduction being based on the assumption that the provision of school milk would make up the majority of the shortfall. Zweiniger-Bargielowska, *Austerity in Britain*, p. 134.

[86] For more on the potential health benefits of blue, violet and ultraviolet light, especially for children, see Tania Woloshyn, ''Kissed by the Sun': Tanning the Skin of the Sick with Light Therapeutics, c.1890–1930,' in *A Medical History of Skin: Scratching the Surface*, ed. by Kevin Siena and Jonathan Reinarz, *(London:* Pickering & Chatto, 2013), pp. 181-194; 'Le Pays du Soleil: The Art of Heliotherapy on the Côte d'Azur', *Social History of Medicine* 26:1 (2013), pp. 74-93.

[87] Woloshyn, ''Kissed by the Sun'', pp. 181-194; Amie Jamieson, 'More Than Meets the Eye: Revealing the Therapeutic of 'Light', 1896-1910', *Social History of Medicine* 26:4 (2013), pp. 715-737.

vitamin D, perhaps referencing the need for additional, non-solar sources of vitamin D in winter months when an ultraviolet light lamp could be used instead. Nutritional rickets as a result of calcium and vitamin D deficiency was itself a disease that was very easy to visualise with markers such as bow legs, curvature of the spine and knock-knees. Yet its visual symptoms were noticeably absent from the poster. It markedly avoided any reference to the health effects of disregarding its advice. Rather, the poster constructed the child as healthy and conforming to governmental advice regarding milk consumption. While the pink outline of the child hinted at the youth and innocence of childhood, it is the bright blue light that acted as a clear and vivid metaphor for aligning milk with childhood health, vigour and vitality. Notably, and unlike many of its counterparts, this poster failed to specifically mention the availability of free and subsidised milk for infants through the welfare foods scheme. By omitting this message it presumed a certain level of awareness about the nutritional value of milk on the part of the general viewing public.[88] Instead it relied on its visual impact to impart the wider health message about the importance of milk for bone development.

Milk was not alone in being reconfigured as a necessity for infants and children during the war. The provision of adequate meals was similarly viewed by central government as essential in reducing the rate of latent malnutrition amongst working class children. Since the early part of the century, the feeding of children slowly entered the public health discourse at national level with governmental commitment secured upon the passing of a series of Education Acts (1906, 1914,

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[88] This concept is borrowed from Sander Gilman and his work on AIDS posters. Sander Gilman, *Picturing Health and Illness: Images of Identity and Difference* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1995).

1921).[89] The interwar government identified the school as the central source for distributing school meals to children. The outbreak of war emphasised inequalities in diet and health across social groups and geographical areas in Britain. In particular, large-scale child evacuation, carried out from September 1939 and especially during the Blitz in 1940, forced the government to accept that school medical inspections were inadequate in assessing child nutrition and that many working class children were suffering from varying degrees of malnutrition.[90] Consequently the government committed resources to a major extension of the provision of school meals.

As part of this commitment, the Ministry of Food established a communal meals division, which viewed school meals as an integral part of the national nutrition policy along with the wider system of British Restaurants and factory canteens.[91] The Education Act of 1944 cemented the governmental commitment to feeding children at school thereby compelling local authorities to both provide school meals and milk and also to employ a qualified school meals organiser.[92] As John Welshman emphasised, by 1945 a complete transformation of governmental attitudes towards school meals and milk was secured, which established a consensus lasting well into the 1960s.[93] Indeed, Richard Titmuss used nutritional supplementation as evidence for his premise that the experience of total war triggered a complete transformation in attitudes to welfare.[94] Under increased pressure instigated by wartime shortages, this initial focus

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[89] Pat Thane has argued that these Acts marked the first major extension from the field of schooling into the realm of welfare. See: Pat Thane, *Foundations of the Welfare State* (London: Longman, 1996), p. 70. Historical studies, which account for the claims for a foundational role of school feeding to the welfare state, have taken two main directions - firstly, on feeding as a means for addressing social ills and largely focused on the medicinal value of solid food, cod liver oil, orange juice and milk and secondly, on the theory-based analysis of school feeding as a mechanism of power to ensure disciplining behavior over working-class children.

[90] John Welshman, 'Evacuation and Social Policy During the Second World War: Myth or Reality', *Twentieth Century British History* 9:1 (1998), pp. 28-53.

[91] Welshman, 'Evacuation and Social Policy During the Second World War', pp. 47.

[92] Ministry of Health, *Health of the School Child, 1939-1945* (London: HMSO, 1947), p. 27.

[93] Welshman, 'Evacuation and Social Policy', p. 47.

[94] As cited by Charles Webster, 'Government Policy on School Meals and Welfare Foods', p. 192.

on children was slowly realigned to include expectant and lactating mothers, and infant children.

Food publicity was also included in magazines during the war and they similarly constructed the child as at risk from malnutrition and therefore in need of governmental intervention through advice, welfare foods and subsidised school meals. The black and white magazine advertisement, produced by the Ministry of Food, 'Calling all mothers', (Figure 1.2), adopted the traditional look of a magazine advice column combining generalist information about what to feed children with a notice about the availability of free guidance leaflets and where to locate further information on topics such as 'what to use for sweetening when sugar is short?'. These advertisements appropriated a successful, established format for disseminating information to a reading public in that they imitated the 'look' and layout of these magazine advice columns.[95]

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[95] See: Penny Tinkler, *Constructing Girlhood: Popular Magazines for Girls Growing up in England, 1920-1950* (London: Taylor & Francis, 1995); Marjorie Ferguson, *Forever Feminine: Women's Magazines and the Cult of Femininity* (London: Heinemann, 1993); Anna Gough-Yates, *Understanding Women's Magazines: Publishing, Markets and Readerships* (London: Routledge, 2003).

Calling all mothers

The right food
and good eating habits
lay the foundation of
health and happiness

THE CHIEF FACTS to remember in feeding children of any age are that, in proportion to their size, children need more of the body-building foods (milk, meat, fish, cheese and eggs, dried milk and dried eggs) than do adults: and to gain their fair chance in life children *must* have their full rations and allowances. So no giving part of their meat and cheese, for instance, to grown-ups, and no putting their priority milk into the family tea-cups!

Use nearly all the Points coupons in the children's books for foods of body-building and protective value: tinned milk, meats, and fish, peas and beans, dried fruits (including prunes), etc. And—this is equally important — make sure the children have a good helping of green vegetables, either raw in salads or lightly cooked, every day.

FREE LEAFLETS

There is a series of leaflets which tell the "why's" and "how's" of planning meals for children from 1 to 17 years of age. The leaflets contain recipes as well as many useful hints. Why not send a postcard for those of interest to you? Please ask for "*How to plan meals for Children,*" and be sure to give the ages of your children. Address: Ministry of Food, Food Advice Division, London, W.1.

Do you know . . .

Orange juice alternatives: What to give instead of orange juice when children are no longer on the Green Ration Book?

What to use for sweetening when sugar is short?

How to select the right kind of foods for a well-balanced meal?

How to introduce good feeding habits without tears?

How to make delicious and nourishing mock cream?

These are just a few of the subjects covered in the "How to plan meals for Children" leaflets. See free offer in paragraph above.

An extra for young workers up to 21:

It is National Milk Cocoa: a grand food and a most delicious drink. Supplies are limited, so for the time being, at any rate, National Milk Cocoa is available only to young people up to 21 years of age, at their place of work and at Youth Clubs. If *your* young people are not getting National Milk Cocoa please urge them to ask about it. It is so important for them, and so nice.

ISSUED BY THE MINISTRY OF FOOD (S130)

Figure 1.3: 'Calling all mothers' (TNA MAF 223/21), c. 1942-1945

On the left hand side of the advertisement are displayed seven stylised faces of children from infants to teenagers. Each image is constructed to emphasise the health benefits of eating good food for the growing body. The images can be read as loosely cumulative moving from top to bottom from the image with the infant girl and infant boy represented as visual equivalents of the teenage girl and teenage boy figures. This established the images of the healthy (and indeed happy) older children as the direct product of eating well throughout childhood. In contrast to the vast majority of poster art focussed on childhood nutrition, which emphasised infant health, this inclusion of children at various ages is noteworthy. It suggested that the Ministry of Food was nonetheless concerned with food and diet amongst adolescents too. Accompanied by detailed textual support, this magazine advertisement presented nutritional information to mothers about feeding children of all ages, while it simultaneously reinforced the tenets of contemporary food charts.

These food, or nutritional, charts (figure 1.3) were first developed in Britain during the Second World War. They grouped food according to their function in the body – body-building foods, protective foods and energy foods. With the introduction of universal rationing of bacon, butter and sugar, in January 1940, food campaigning in terms of specific information provision became a necessary and largely accepted site for broadcasting Ministry of Food policy.[96] As part of this strategy, the Ministry of Food, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, launched a national campaign – *Food Economy* – in April 1940. Directed at the range of foodstuffs not yet rationed and designed to reduce the need for imported supplies, the *Food Economy* campaign focussed on explaining the value of foods in relation to health and pioneered the introduction of a four-food group model of nutritional guidelines. These types of charts acted as a form of health education by attempting to popularise scientific knowledge about food, and by promoting new ways of thinking about diet and individual energy requirements.

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[96] As the war continued and food imports became increasingly difficult to secure, tea, margarine, lard (from July 1940), cheese, preserves (both from 1941), and sweets (from summer 1942) were added to the flat-rate food ration. For more detail see: Zweiniger-Bargielowska, *Austerity in Britain*, pp. 18-21.

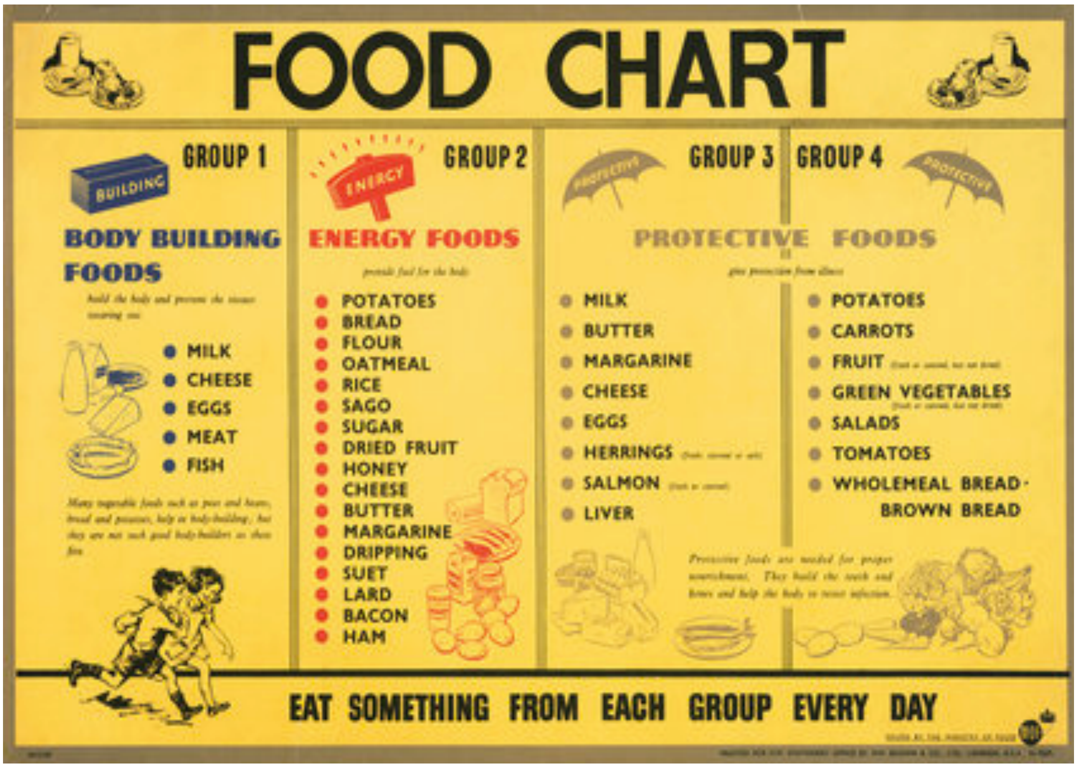

Figure 1.4: 'Food Chart' (IWM PST 0726) c.1940-1955

The MoF considered precise compositional information as essential in order to facilitate individual balanced diets, especially under the circumstances of extensive food control. Foods were grouped according to their dietetic importance in a simple and clear manner. Listing those foods associated with particular functional groups (foods for body-building, for energy and for protection), while incorporating corresponding illustrative images, allowed the textual and visual elements to be mutually supportive. This chart therefore attempted to reconcile the need for precise nutritional information and the differing levels of dietary knowledge in the population as a whole.

While the chart lists foods under each of the main food groups, its accompanying visual illustrations are equally notable. Almost every part of the poster not used for these textual lists is used for additional visual sketches. These often visually reproduced the foods listed in each group, but they also included two running children in the bottom-left section of the chart. They are the only 'human' element in the chart and as such denote the well-being that could be derived from following the advice to 'eat something from each group every day'. Their presence ensured that this chart was linked to health for all age groups. Notably, this food chart was produced and disseminated during a period when many of the foods listed for their body-building, energy-giving or protective qualities were in short supply. The chart certainly overlooked the context of contemporary food shortages in formulating governmental advice on the nutritional benefits of particular foods. In doing so, it created continuity with postwar nutrition advice in the 1950s and 1960s and suggested that its creation reflected a commitment to long-term nutrition information for the public, rather than a short-term response to exceptional food consumption circumstances. The Ministry of Food, throughout the 1940s and in conjunction with the Ministry of Agriculture, conducted research on adequate calorie intake for adults and children alike, in concerted attempts to formulate a nutrition policy founded on accurate scientific information.[97]

Each group in this food chart included a supporting icon: a building brick aptly signified body-building foods, a sledge hammer symbolised foods needed for energy while the umbrella denoted the additional need for protective foods in the daily diet. Whereas posters relied on the importance of the visual, supplemented by somewhat limited text, the primary function of such charts was to present a more in-depth, detailed and lucid level of information in a relatively succinct format. Textual information was the key purpose of this publicity, with the visual functioning in a supportive capacity, which operated, as argued by Sander Gilman, to form a narrative

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[97] TNA, INF 1/978, 'Lord Woolton, Minister of Food speaking on the 18th of February 1943, and as printed in the *Home Front Handbook, 1939-1945* (London: HMSO, 1946), p. 35.

closure with each element (textual and visual) acting as verification for the other in the public eye.[98]

Linking with existing publicity aimed at child health and nutrition, the chart built on previous campaigning material focussed on childhood health and widened these guidelines to incorporate adolescent and adult consumers alike. Its use of a striking coloured background, while emphasising the nutritional division of foodstuffs, drew upon a large consumer culture that was focussed on the growth of arresting visual symbols within the realm of private industry.[99] In particular, the interwar period had witnessed a rapid explosion of colourful explanatory advertising material that was aimed at promoting the uptake of vitamin supplementation in the national diet.[100] Importantly, this was the first such nutritional chart produced by a central government department. There had instead been a previous reliance on local government and voluntary initiatives in the distribution of nutritional information that was primarily focused on adult diets. Representing an early stratagem centred on disseminating nutritional knowledge through simple chart-based guidelines, the functional foods model proved particularly enduring and strongly normative. Indeed, this basic chart format and its four groups would remain, essentially unchanged as the main visual tool for governmental-led nutritional education aimed at adults and

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[98] Sander Gilman, *Picturing Health and Illness*, p. 16; Roger Cooter and Claudia Stein, 'Coming into focus: Posters, power and visual culture in the history of medicine', *Medizinhistorisches Journal* 42 (2007), p. 186.

[99] For example see: Paul Jobling, ''Virility' in Design: Advertising Austin Reed and the 'New Tailoring' during the Interwar Period in Britain', *Fashion Theory: The Journal of Dress, Body & Culture* 9:1 (2005), pp. 57-84 and Mica Nava, 'Modernity tamed?: Women shoppers and the rationalization of consumption in the inter-war period', in *All the World and Her Husband: Women in Twentieth Century Consumer Culture*, ed. by Maggie Andrews and Mary M. Talbot (London and New York: Cassell, 2000), pp. 46-64.

[100] Sally M. Horrocks, 'Nutritional Science and the Food and Pharmaceutical Industries in Inter-War Britain' in David F. Smith (ed) *Nutrition in Britain: Science, scientists and politics in the twentieth century* (London, 1997), pp. 53-74. For the US context see: Rima Apple, *Vitamania*.

children alike until the early 1960s.[101] Its endurance succinctly highlighted the growing value placed on nutritional guidelines by successive governments, especially following the cessation of food control by the Conservative-led government in 1954.

While the government increasingly publicised nutrition advice through food groups, as we have seen it also placed substantial importance on the merits of certain foods to the health of specific groups, especially infants and children. During the middle years of the war it formulated a comprehensive nutrition policy that included an expansion of communal feeding, the extension of vitamin and welfare food schemes and the fortification of margarine and flour with specific vitamins.[102] In addition, the Ministry of Food launched controlled distribution of milk and eggs in 1941 with the purpose of raising the intake of protein, calcium and vitamins among those groups identified as 'vulnerable' (expectant and nursing mothers, children, adolescents and invalids).[103] In particular, publicity for the welfare foods scheme implored women to perform their duty as mothers and active citizens who were engaged in the war effort to avail of their entitlement to additional milk and certain priority rations. From 1942 these rations included subsidised or free vitamin supplements – orange juice, cod liver oil and vitamin tablets. Yet, despite the 'continuous publicity and educational efforts' afforded to these foods, cod liver oil, in particular (and perhaps unsurprisingly), remained unpopular. In efforts to promote cod liver oil, the Ministry of Food recommended that parents be careful to hide their own dislike.[104] Indeed, a mother who failed to consume all her priority allowances

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[101] A very brief discussion of two posters advertising these food groups during the 1950s is provided by Hester Vaizey in *Keep Britain Tidy and Other Posters from the Nanny State* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2014), pp. 27-30 [pages not numbered].

[102] TNA, MAF 223/29, 'The feeding of children and young people', 1943.

[103] Ministry of Food, *How Britain was Fed in Wartime*, p. 42.

[104] TNA, MAF 75/89, 'Welfare Foods: Appendix 24'; TNA MAF 98/60 'Welfare Foods Scheme: Note upon Cod Liver Oil', 29 January 1946 and 'Minute', 14 March 1949.

risked loosing the extra available calcium and vitamins, themselves ‘so necessary for maternal and infant health’.[105]

Figure 1.4: ‘Mother: don’t forget baby’s cod liver oil and orange juice’ (IWM PST 0710), c. 1946

‘Mother – don’t forget baby’s cod liver oil and orange juice’ (Figure 1.4) produced within this emergent focus on mothers and infant children, constructed the consumption of cod liver oil and orange juice as crucial for growing babies. Set against a baby blue sky with white fluffy clouds, two flying storks fill much of the poster. They were proudly carrying cod liver oil and orange juice, their glass bottles visible above the swaddling cloth packaging, symbolically and visually referencing

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[105] Arthur McNalty, *The Civilian Health and Medical Service* (London: HMSO, 1953), pp. 130-131.

the stork as the safe courier of infants and the guardian of child and maternal health. This poster utilised the stork to reference notions of both purity and parental commitment. The emboldened text, ‘mother’, occupying the top of the poster established the target audience and as such represented a call to action. Thus, these highly stylised representations strove to elevate certain health behaviours as essential to appropriate mothering. In this way it dovetailed with contemporary understandings of the gendered division of labour and women’s societal position as natural caregivers. It recalled wider constructions of scientific motherhood, which had been in evidence during the interwar years, and applied them to the wartime context.[106]

The poster relied on its traditional depictions of the stork carrying a baby to convey the importance of providing infants with sufficient nutrition through dietary supplementation. The arrangement of the poster and its textual elements characterised the mother as the central agent in the process of disseminating health information and for availing of government sponsored and supported infant welfare. This identification individualised wartime motherhood by emphasising a singularity (e.g. ‘Mother’, ‘baby’s’) in advertising the welfare scheme. With this image, the Ministry of Food attempted to encourage individual women to take up welfare foods following the extension of the scheme in 1942 to benefit their children. The government increasingly relied on poster material to promote welfare foods, especially as the scheme was dogged by low uptake following its initial launch.[107] While it remains almost impossible to quantitatively determine the success or failure of these visual posters aimed at increasing national uptake of welfare foods, larger survey results about wartime uptake suggest they had only a limited effect. Indeed, throughout the

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[106] Apple, ‘Constructing Mothers’, pp. 161-178.
[107] TNA, MAF 75/89, ‘Welfare foods: Appendix 24’, 1939-1954.

period of rationing uptake of orange juice peaked at just over fifty per cent of all those eligible, while cod liver oil was consumed by less than one in five of those entitled.[108]

Throughout the war, women and mothers were constructed as active agents in linking governmental policy on welfare with the enactment of these policies through new modes of infant feeding. As these posters have shown, food was coded as essential for building healthy bodies and helping them grow to adulthood, linking with a wider rhetoric on wartime efficiency and the health-giving roles of women as mothers. These highly constructed images established the infant as an important site for translating governmental welfare programmes into modes of education, themselves closely linked to the tenets of scientific education. Posters such as 'Mother – don't forget baby's cod liver oil and orange juice' (Figure 1.4) promoted homogenised understandings of childcare in terms of health. In this way support for private personal (and familial) mothercare expertise was diminished as standardised practices of childrearing were disseminated through welfare campaigns. They established in visual and textual forms the importance primarily of milk, cod liver oil and orange juice to the growth of young children and in doing so elevated the primacy of nutritional knowledge and scientific understandings of vitamins and the body to the raising of healthy children. Yet, the publicisation of food and health was impacting on other aspects of wartime culture in Britain. In particular, discourses around growing food, and eating home-grown produce, were visualised and promoted within a graphic design tradition previously aligned to the London Transport Board and the General Post Office (GPO) in particular, alongside commercial advertising in interwar Britain.

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[108] TNA, MAF 75/89, 'Welfare foods: Appendix 24', 1939-1954.

‘Eat Greens Daily’ and the Wartime Graphic Design Tradition

The Ministry of Food engaged the services of a number of well-known graphic designers for the purposes of constructing a unique design aesthetic around food in order to encourage the increased home production of food.[109] At the outset of war, Britain imported over half its food requirements. In 1938, for example, seventy per cent of food supplies (by value) were imported, largely owing to the national farming depression, which had followed the Agriculture Act of 1921, and had been responsible for halting price protection for agricultural produce.[110] As a consequence of reliance on imports, the wartime national food shortage ensured that the Ministry of Food placed much significance on food publicity for disseminating information about food shortages, rationing and encouraging prudent food choices. The MoF, under the direction of Lord Woolton, targeted the public through food publicity, aiming to create a ‘food-conscious’ nation and believing that ‘[t]he British public will stand almost anything if it is taken into the confidence of the Ministry concerned’.[111] As part of this shift towards food publicity, the Ministry of Food was especially dedicated in its attempts to educate the public on a variety of dietary and nutritional issues, especially in relation to health. Campaigns focused on encouraging the public to ‘Grow Your Own Food’ and ‘Dig for Victory’, and they were often coupled with publicity schemes that conveyed the nutritional benefits of eating vegetables. Cabbage and other leafy greens were special focuses of governmental campaigning, in part due to their nutritional composition and because they grow easily. The objective to

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[109] The most famous of these were Hans Schleger, Abram Games, George Wim, Jan Le Witt and James Fitton. Hans Schleger Papers, Victoria and Albert Museum: Archive of Art and Design, AD/2008/11. See also: Jonathan Black, ‘For the People’s Good: Hans Schleger (1898-1976), Poster Design and British National Identity, 1935-1960, *Visual Culture in Britain* 13:2 (2012), pp. 169-190.

[110] Brian Short, Charles Watkins and John Martin, *The Front Line of Freedom: British Farming in the Second World War* (Exeter: The British Agricultural History Society, 2006), p. 4.

[111] ‘The Woolton Dictum’, 1940, as cited in Farmer, *The Food Companions*, p. 20.

establish the cabbage as an important food within wartime Britain prompted governmental publicity to visualise these unpopular home-grown vegetables as more acceptable to the British palette. This usually involved linking the national consumption of leafy green vegetables to notions of morale and commitment to the war effort. Within this context the MoF attempted to increase the consumption of green vegetables in three ways. Firstly, the government attempted to encourage a rise in consumption. Secondly, it aimed to educate the public concerning the effects of over-cooking on the nutritional composition of food and thirdly it introduced specific campaigning material focused on increased production amongst non-farmers.

With the extension of the ‘Dig for Victory’ campaign during early 1942, the Ministry of Food engaged the services of Hans Schleger to design a series of posters advocating eating and growing green vegetables. A German-British graphic designer, Schleger had previously produced wartime publicity material for the London Passenger Transport Board and the GPO. From 1942 he designed a number of posters in a striking modernist style in efforts to encourage the British population to grow their own vegetables. Devised as a supplement to the existing ‘Dig for Victory’ campaign, which had been in use since 1940, this new initiative sought to increase production primarily through the efforts of allotment holders while encouraging the general public to cultivate land as an important aspect of the war effort.[112] Schleger’s designs firmly allied Ministry of Food propaganda with contemporary modernist styles of fine art. This linkage created a visually distinct form of food poster within the Ministry that emphasised limited textual support, which also performed a visual function. These posters were themselves unique interpretations of the food and health

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[112] Juliet Gardiner, *Wartime Britain, 1939-1944* (London: Headline, 2004), p.163.

agenda, with visual schemata that constructed meaning about food in interesting and distinctive ways.

Schleger was greatly influenced by the Russian school of Constructivism, German Bauhaus and the Dutch *De Stijl* movement, each of which had proliferated during the interwar period.[113] Consequently, his imagery for the MoF showed an appreciation for their common approach to design, emphasising the importance of art as a practice for social purposes with a focus on the centrality of function over form. By assimilating eclectic avant-garde influences, Schleger was able to skilfully forge a purposeful design that retained his own distinctive characteristics.[114] His approach to governmental publicity stemmed from the burgeoning consumer culture that had expanded greatly during the interwar years and within which context posters had performed important advertising functions. Geometrical simplicity had long been visible within pre-existing advertising culture and it was perhaps therefore unsurprising that these same influences became increasingly visible within state-led initiatives.[115] By building on established trends in advertising more generally, Schleger constructed his designs for MoF publicity material, produced within a context of total war, to establish greater awareness, appreciation and acceptance of large-scale food control.[116]

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[113] Black, 'For the People's Good', p. 172.

[114] Mark Haworth-Booth, *E. McKnight Kauffer: A Designer and his Public* (London, 2005), p. 60; Robin Kinross, 'Emigré Graphic Designers in Britain: Around the Second World War and Afterwards', *Journal of Design History* 3:1 (1990), pp. 35-57.

[115] For example see: Matthew Hilton, 'Advertising, the Modernist Aesthetic of the Marketplace? The Cultural Relationship Between the Tobacco Manufacturer and the 'Mass' of Consumers in Britain, 1870-1940', in *Meanings of Modernity: Britain from the Late-Victorian Era to World War II*, ed. by Martin Daunton and Bernhard Rieger (Oxford: Berg, 2001), pp. 45-70.

[116] Black, 'For the People's Good', p. 169-190.

Figure 1.5: ‘Eat Greens Daily’ (Art. IWM PST 3454), Hans Schleger (Zero), 1944.

As part of this new ‘Dig for Victory’ supplement series, a number of posters pronounced the health benefits of leafy green vegetables to the British population. To this end, ‘Feed right to feel right’ (Figure 1.5) utilised clear and uncluttered artistry to convey its health message and emphasised the image of the cabbage. Indebted to the graphic school of European modernism and Russian constructivism, the image of the cabbage performed a textual function. Both the image and text created an economical, integrated sentence. Many constructivists had worked on the design of posters for cinema, political propaganda, health and social services amongst others. They rejected the idea of art for art’s sake and instead advanced art as a practice for initiating social change or serving a social purpose.[117] It was within this tradition that many British graphic designers, themselves influenced by avant-garde movements in Europe, created visual propaganda pieces for central government. By referencing this particular modernist heritage, Schleger facilitated a pared-back interpretation of the importance of vegetables in the diet of Britons. In this example, the text of the poster was fully integrated into the design through being featured as a newspaper headline. The poster functioned visually as well as textually and it was only the ‘eat’ that directly addressed the viewer, appearing superimposed over the represented images of the cabbage, the cutlery and the newspaper. It was therefore operating on two levels – the entire visual composition centred on ‘eat greens daily’ and the textual newspaper headline proclaiming ‘eat greens for health Daily’. The cabbage was juxtaposed with a newspaper, focussed on highlighting the importance of eating ‘greens for health’, itself presented as news or newsworthy while it adopted a familiar ‘read all about it’ format. It referenced the newspaper as ritual, part of the ‘Daily’ routine and therefore equated eating green vegetables with the usual, the everyday and the custom of the daily broadsheet. Similarly, the poster was exploiting a trust in the broadsheet newspaper as the purveyor of dependable, honest and reliable news.

In this context the cabbage was conveyed as ‘big news’, advancing new scientific knowledge about nutrition ‘for health’ and building upon the vitamins revolution of the interwar years. Indeed, it was partly the high vitamin content of dark green vegetables, which ensured that this pictorial emphasis on nutritional health benefits became the central visual purpose of the image. A large consumer culture had

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[117] For more on the development of Russian constructivism and avant-garde schools of art and architecture in the interwar period see: Christina Lodder, *Russian Constructivism* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1983); Maria Gough, *The Artist as Producer: Russian constructivism in revolution* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005); Catherine Cook, *Russian avant-garde: theories of art, architecture and the city* (London: Academy Editions, 1995); Bruce Altshuler, *The Avant-Garde in Exhibtion: new art in the twentieth century* (New York: Abrams, 1994).

developed around vitamins during the 1920s and 1930s with a burgeoning market in pills, tonics, enriched flour and naturally vitamin-rich food (of which cabbage was one).[118] The construction of vitamins as essential components of the healthy diet relied upon the role of particular (yet contemporaneously chemically ill-defined) nutrients in preventing specific dietary deficiency diseases.[119] In the process of characterising vitamins in terms of their chemical and molecular composition, scientists developed quantitative requirements for individual vitamins that provided a new justification for nutritional and medical intervention centred on preventing and treating deficiency diseases. Within this existing context, this poster attempted to transform the unpopular cabbage into a 'vitaminised' food that helped keep the home front healthy.[120]

Its assured sense of colour also reinforced the need for the public to heed governmental advice pertaining to food that was oftentimes disseminated in a variety of local, regional and national newspapers. The use of a vivid green for the cabbage served to centre the viewer's eye to the main function of the poster: that was to encourage the eating of green vegetables. The inclusion of the oversized spoon and fork only reinforced this obvious attempt at persuading swathes of the population to increase personal consumption (by making the large head of cabbage visually smaller in relation to the oversized cutlery, the poster suggested that the cabbage itself was smaller and thus more manageable to eat). The imagery of the generic daily

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[118] Horrocks, ''Nutrition Science and the Food and Pharmaceutical Industries in Inter-War Britain', pp. 62-63.

[119] Harmke Kamminga, 'Vitamins and the Dynamics of Molecularization: Biochemistry, Policy and Industry in Britain, 1914-1939', in *Molecularizing Biology and Medicine: New Practices and Alliances, 1920s to 1970s*, ed. by Soraya de Chadarevian and Harmke Kamminga (Amsterdam: Harwood Academic, 1998), pp. 78-98. The successful treatment and prevention of such diseases, that themselves held particular social and political significance, strengthened support for the role of vitamins in preventing ill health and the development of consumer products designed to capitalise on this. See also: Horrocks, 'Nutrition Science and the Food and Pharmaceutical Industries in Inter-War Britain', pp. 53-74.

[120] Black, 'For the People's Good', p. 182.

newspaper with its brief, informative text ‘Eat Greens For Health...Feed Right to Feel Right’ referenced the close connection between eating sufficient green, leafy vegetables and the maintenance of good health.

With falling food supplies due to a reduction in imports to half the pre-war level by early 1941, nutritional aspects of food policy were continuously emphasised. Within policy circles, these necessary nutrients were perceived to be the ‘weak points of the National diet’ throughout the war.[121] Recognising this, the MoF produced such posters (alongside leaflets, radio broadcasts and film shorts) to bring to the attention of the public the vital role that vegetables in particular could play in achieving nutritional sufficiency in protein and vitamins.[122] Therefore, during a time when the state generally, and the MoF particularly, were increasingly concerned about ensuring universal nutrient distribution, it is perhaps unsurprising that propaganda was used to not only encourage increased production at an individual level, but also increased personal consumption of home grown foods. Working from a pre-war model of general nutritional requirement the government attempted to overcome the public’s perceived dislike of certain foodstuffs. The Ministry was well aware that ‘green vegetables are not a popular item of the diet, and when they are purchased, are prepared in such a way that most of the vitamin content is destroyed before eating.’[123] Figure 1.6, borne out of this commitment, pictorially focussed on the metaphorical loss of vegetable nutrients through over-cooking.

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[121] TNA T223/249, Food Economy Campaign and Food Education: General Publicity, February 1944.

[122] In particular the potato publicity campaign received a large multi-media response aimed at reducing national consumption of bread. See: TNA MAF 86/382, ‘Potato publicity campaign’, 1942-1943; TNA MAF 86/391, ‘Potato publicity campaign’, 1943-1944.

[123] TNA T223/249, ‘Food Economy Campaign and Food Education: General Publicity’, February 1944.

Figure 1.6: 'The Effects of Over-Cooking and Keeping Hot' (IWM PST 8411), George Him and Jan Le Witt (Lewitt-Him), c. 1941-1944.

In this poster, the reference to the importance of vitamins (and their loss by over-cooking) is again conveyed. Designed by George Him and Jan Le Witt, two Polish born artists, this poster adopted the metaphor of the vegetable itself as representative of its nutritional content.[124] By doing so, it endeavoured to make a very obvious and clear point – overcooking not only destroys vitamin content, it is also the equivalent of waste. During the war, waste was continually discouraged and the government strongly supported making diligent use of all available resources, especially of

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[124] Lewitt-Him worked for the Ministry of Information during the war and are perhaps most well known for their 'Go by Shanks Pony, Walk short distances' poster, produced in 1944.

rationed goods or produce in short supply.[125] Therefore this poster was performing a dual function - one that was centred on ensuring all food produce was consumed whilst educating the public (and more specifically, the housewife) in correct cooking practices for retaining the vitamin content of fresh vegetables.

Its use of colour referenced the realist style of interwar art production. It focused on the chimney and flue of the urban environment with flattened counterparts of neighbouring houses blending with the pale, greyish background. Its compressed perspective and planularity combined with an abstract angularity further dovetailed with a wider trend in mid-century industrial art.[126] While the poster, arguably conformed to visual tropes associated with still life – with native vegetables playing a central visual role and the chimney pot performing a function not dissimilar to the decorative bowl – the visual cues referred to a wider urban landscape, and combined with a muted colour scheme, thus conforming to those broader trends in urban art of the period.[127] The bright colours of the vegetables contrast with and were accentuated by the murky greyness of the sky. This contrast emphasised the understanding that by overcooking these vegetables both their vibrant colours and their nutrient content would be lost. While many of the Dig for Victory campaigns utilised a visually 'green' colour palette that evoked the rural, agricultural countryside, the urban cityscape depicted in this poster is unusual in that it emphasised the urban context of vegetable consumption.

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[125] For example, the Ministry of Information ran a national poster campaign, 'Salvage: Save waste for war weapons' from 1939-1946. TNA INF 3/208, 'Posters: Salvage: Save waster for war weapons', 1939-1946.

[126] The colour palette and location for this poster recalled the distinctive style of L.S. Lowry, best known for his urban, industrial landscape paintings. For example, Lowry's inclusion of the smoking chimneys of a row of terraced houses is clearly depicted in *A Street Scene* (1928, The Lowry Collection, Salford). Similarly, his industrial landscape *The Lake* (1937, The Lowry Collection, Salford) emphasises the industrial chimneys of a northern town in the background of the painting.

[127] Most notable are Pierre Adoplhe Valette and L. S. Lowry.

The state often faced production problems stemming from the reluctance of individuals to grow green vegetables, due in the main to their inherent unpopularity, and the subsequent difficulty in selling their yield.[128] As a result, those campaigns that centred on digging for victory and increasing vegetable consumption were purposefully timed to encourage growers to multiply the proportion of green vegetables in the new season crops.[129] State control over modes of agricultural production and food distribution ensured unparalleled influence over farm-based food production, but wider 'Dig for Victory' campaigning, of which these posters are a part, were specifically aimed at encouraging non-farming citizens to use all available cultivatable land for personal food production as well as supplying local suppliers with in-season fruit and vegetables.

Again, Schleger played an important role in conveying this nutritional message to the wider public. His work emphasised a well-informed appreciation for surrealism and contemporary design culture, particularly the work of Man Ray, Kurt Schwitters, Herbert Bayer and Roland Penrose. Interwar surrealism sought to locate and redefine the marvellous of everyday life and it was within this artistic school that Schleger's work for the Ministry of Food combined elements of photography, photomontage and what could now be termed metaphorical realism. 'Grow Your Own Food' (Figure 1.7) in particular referenced key trends in interwar modernism with simplicity of style, metaphorical foci and subdued use of colour. Unembellished brown and blue tones permeated the poster, referencing the English rural landscape within a realist tradition. In doing so it extended upon his earlier poster, 'The Green Man' (Figure 1.8 [1939]) for the London Passenger Transport Board, which similarly tried to engage with representations of the British countryside. Produced just before

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[128] TNA T223/249, 'Food Economy Campaign: education and general publicity', 1944-1949.
[129] TNA T223/249, 'Food Economy Campaign: education and general publicity', 1944-1949.

the outbreak of war in September of that year, ‘The Green Man’ imbued a tranquillity and peacefulness with nature, where landscape was ‘humanised’ through an emphasis on the male face, the natural tones of his complexion and beard blending into the landscape. This sense of environmental harmony was suspended following the destruction wrought upon much of the urban cityscape during the Blitz. Schleger’s use of realistic greens, blues and browns referenced the varying natural shades of the countryside but was more restrained in the later ‘Grow Your Own Food’ (Figure 1.7), its message more earnest and solemn. While both represented a metamorphosis of the natural landscape, ‘Grow Your Own Food’ constructed the message in much more clearly educative ways.

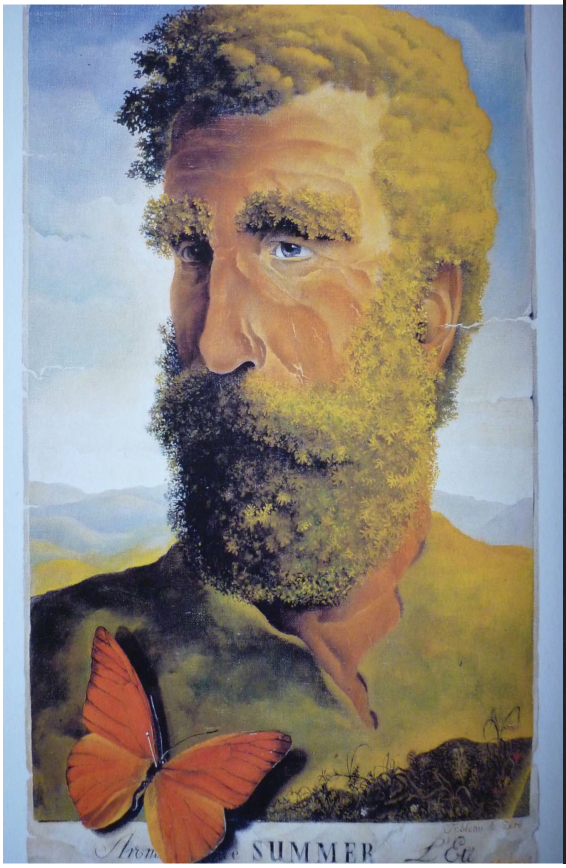

Figure 1.7: ‘The Green Man’ (reproduced in (Jonathan Black, ‘For the People’s Good’, courtesy of Hans Schleger Papers, Archives of the Royal Society of the Arts, London), 1939.

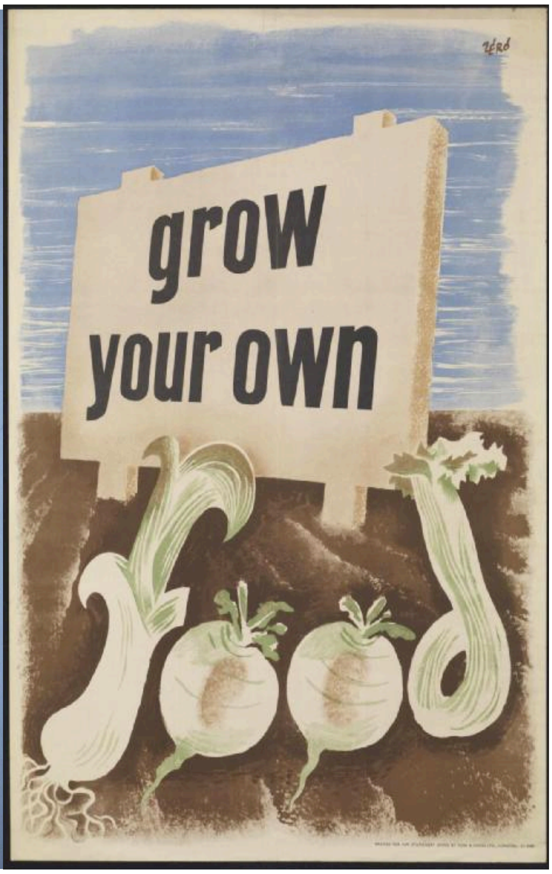

Figure 1.8: ‘Grow Your Own Food’ (IWM PST 17017) Hans Schleger (Zero), 1942.

This poster visualised the importance of growing food and eating home-grown produce for the war effort. Food itself was mobilised as one textual point of the poster and in doing so indigenous foodstuffs (leek, swede and celery) were purposefully yet playfully promoted. The implication here was that such vegetables were not only easy to grow, but should also occupy an important position within the diet through the depiction of foregrounded vegetables themselves spelling out the climactic word, ‘Food’. Building upon the principle that the ‘English’ did not respond favourably to having instructions forced upon them, Schleger adopted a state-approved approach that combined courtesy and informal instruction with an element of good humour.[130] In this way, the poster attempted to tell the public that these vegetables were important foods, especially in the absence of large quantities of meat, fats, eggs and other prewar dietary staples.

Drawing on similar artistic traditions as those employed in ‘Eat Greens Daily’ and ‘Grown Your Own Food’, Schleger’s skilful use of photomontage in ‘For Vitality, Eat Greens’ (Figure 1.9) succeeded in elevating work on the land to an equivalent of front line military service. Yet again, firmly rooted within the artistic context of modernism, this poster represented a move away from the customary visual allusion to, or focus on, the female as the central target of government publicity pertaining to food. Instead, the role of the man within home front society was stressed without threatening traditional societal norms. The poster’s emphasis on the young, lithe male through a black and white photograph constructed vegetables as vital components of the war machine that could contribute to strength. He was portrayed as an active participant in the war effort, yet the textual element of the poster suggested that this was through healthy eating alone. By insinuating that eating the right foods

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[130] Black, ‘For the People’s Good’, p. 182.

was important for subscribing to contemporary notions of citizenship, the poster was again supporting the dual ‘reading’ that growing *and* eating greens were essential for the war effort. In this respect, the focus on land labour may have been purposeful. While agriculture was suffering from chronic underemployment during much of the war, the widespread extension of female conscription for war work through the Land Army from 1941 remained notably absent from this visual construction.[131] Thus, this poster upheld traditional understandings of male labour and general physicality, while it operated as an important adjunct to extant food publicity material by equating vegetables with strength. In addition, prompted by severe meat shortage throughout the war, this poster counterbalanced traditional associations of meat consumption with physical strength and masculinity.[132] While contemporaneous nutritional charts still emphasised the role of meat protein for body-building (see Figure 1.3), other governmental publicity attempted to reconcile such traditional understandings of animal versus vegetable nourishment. ‘For Vitality, Eat Greens’ was contributing to this visual realignment of green vegetables as adaptable, healthy alternatives to meat, with equivalent potential for contributing to the strength and vigour of the consuming individual.

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[131] As Rebecca Lewis has argued in her doctoral thesis on wartime propaganda, all Land Army advertisements avoided explicitly visualizing women engaged in hard manual labour, instead focusing on ‘gentle’ agricultural tasks such as looking after animals or surveying land. See Lewis, ‘The Planning, Design and Reception of British Home Front Propaganda Posters of the Second World War’, p. 128. For research on the Women’s Land Army see: Penny Summerfield, *Women Workers in the Second World War: Production and Patriarchy in Conflict* (London and New York: Routledge, 1984).

[132] See: Keir Waddington, *The Bovine Scourge: Meat, Tuberculosis and Public Health, 1850-1914* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2006); Levenstein, *Paradox of Plenty*; Frank Trentmann, ‘Beyond Consumerism: New Historical Perspectives on Consumption’, *Journal of Contemporary History* 39:3 (2002), pp. 373-401.

Figure 1.9: 'For Vitality, Eat Greens' (IWM PST 3084), Hans Schleger (Zero), 1942.

Within a wartime environment, the production of these publicity materials was part of a broader governmental objective concerned with maintaining national unity and securing voluntary cooperation while preserving civilian morale. As the war began to affect numerous aspects of civilian life, the population was inundated with information concerning the new regulations and directives of the home front.[133] Maintaining civilian morale therefore became integrated with food policy as central components of the government's civil programme.[134] A combination of poster, leaflet, pamphlet and documentary material generated a sense of urgency and encouraged a positive response to wartime changes that were affecting individual lifestyles en

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[133] Farmer, *The Food Companions*, pp. 1-5.

[134] Charles Webster, 'Government Policy on School Meals and Welfare Foods', p. 192.

masse. As Richard Taylor argued, one of the defining characteristics of propaganda (as a neutral attempt to persuade and encourage the viewer) was its need to encourage action. For him, propaganda was ‘the attempt to influence the public opinions of an audience through transmission of ideas and values’.[135] Therefore, the British government’s need for both national unity and behavioural change made both direct and indirect propaganda an essential tool based on the individual as representative of the communal.

‘It is your duty to make yourself look your best’[136]: Beauty, Gender and Food in Wartime Britain

Beauty in the Salad Bowl

Salads are Nature’s beauty foods. They help to put roses in your cheeks, clear your skin, give you bright eyes and glossy hair. And what more pleasant way to health and beauty than a salad a day? You can have plenty of variety, for all green vegetables and young root vegetables are at home in the salad bowl — in fact, most of them are richer in health-giving vitamins than the conventional lettuce. Below are some suggestions to set you experimenting with your own delicious combinations of salad ingredients.

SALAD HINTS

Salads should be well blended with dressing before serving. Shake vegetables dry in cloth or salad basket as dressing does not cling to wet ingredients. Shred cabbage with a sharp knife; tender leaves of lettuce or spinach with fingers. Grate or shred root vegetables. Line bowl with lettuce leaves, mix main ingredients with dressing, place in bowl, add garnishing.

SUMMER SALAD

1 lettuce, 1 breakfastcupful of shredded cabbage or spinach leaves, 1 breakfastcupful of cooked green peas, 1 breakfastcupful diced cooked potato and some mint sauce. Radishes for garnishing.

Line a bowl with lettuce leaves. Mix the cabbage or spinach, peas and potato with mint sauce used as salad dressing. Put into bowl, garnish with lettuce heart and radish roses. (Cut long-shaped radishes cross-ways two or three times with a small sharp knife, nearly to root end. Leave in cold water until the “ petals ” expand.)

A MAIN MEAL SALAD

8 oz. cooked fish, 1 chopped hard-boiled egg (fresh, or a reconstituted dried egg steamed in egg-cups), 2 level tablespoons chopped parsley, pinch of paprika pepper, pinch of black pepper, 1-1½ level teaspoons salt, 1 level tablespoon chopped spring onion, 2 level tablespoons salad dressing, 1 lettuce, 1 bunch of watercress, ¼ pint cooked peas.

Mix well together the fish, egg, parsley, seasoning and onion with the salad dressing. Divide mixture into four mounds and arrange on bed of lettuce. Decorate with watercress, peas and parsley.

SOME SALAD DRESSINGS

SALAD DRESSING: *2 level tablespoons flour, 1 level tablespoon dried egg (dry), 1 level teaspoon mustard, 1 level teaspoon sugar, 1 level teaspoon salt, pepper, ½ pint milk or vegetable water, 1 oz. margarine, 4 tablespoons vinegar.*

Mix flour, egg, mustard, sugar, salt and pepper to a smooth paste with a little of the liquid. Boil remaining liquid, pour on to the blended flour, return to pan and bring to the boil, stirring all the time. Boil gently for 5 minutes. Remove from the heat and add margarine. Mix well and add vinegar.

THIN SALAD DRESSING: This is very good to use when you cannot get oil. *½ teaspoon mustard, ½ teaspoon salt, 1 teaspoon sugar, pinch of pepper, 2 tablespoons top of milk, 1 tablespoon vinegar.*

Mix the seasoning together and mix in the milk gradually. When quite smooth, add the vinegar and stir well. Use same day.

FOR THE CHILDREN: A delicious salad dressing, which children especially will love, is to blend 2 tablespoons top of milk with 2 level teaspoons sugar, pinch of salt, and a pinch of pepper. Gradually stir in 1 tablespoon lemon juice. (C14)

ISSUED BY THE MINISTRY OF FOOD

Figure 1.10: ‘Beauty in the Salad Bowl’ (TNA MAF 223/21), c. 1945 – Magazine advertisement.

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[135] Richard Taylor, *Film propaganda: Soviet Russia and Nazi Germany* (London, 1998), p. 15.

[136] ‘It is your duty to make sure you look your best’, *Woman’s Own*, 1940.

In part due to the very nature of rationing and its impact on the household (in relation to shopping, cooking, and feeding), representations of women on the home front proliferated during the war. Within this context, very specific visual constructions of women and womanhood emerged in wartime publicity material. They often pivoted upon the expectation that women should conserve and defend what the government perceived as the conventional qualities of femininity. During a period of great national austerity the government called on women to forgo countless material goods aimed at maintaining personal appearance, but look as if nothing had changed. Women were encouraged to preserve pre-war notions of beauty to boost and keep up morale both on the home front and in the armed forces fighting abroad.[137] This discourse of 'beauty as duty' pervaded in both contemporary women's magazines and governmental publicity advancing the idea that pride in personal appearance was a patriotic matter central to the war effort. While dress had been identified as the single most powerful marker of gender difference, beauty was closely related and the Ministry of Food established diet and healthy eating as an important adjunct to this discourse.[138] In particular, it identified and promoted the benefits of fruit and vegetables to maintain an attractive complexion, shiny hair and bright eyes.[139]

'Beauty in the Salad Bowl' (Figure 1.10), a Ministry of Food magazine advertisement from c. 1945 provided detailed textual information on how to use food as a natural beauty treatment. Outlining that 'Salad's are Nature's beauty foods', this advertisement promoted green and root vegetables because 'most of them are richer in health-giving vitamins than conventional lettuce'. The visual component of the

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[137] Pat Kirkham, 'Beauty and Duty': Keeping Up the (Home) Front', in *War Culture: Social Change and Changing Experience in World War Two*, ed. by Pat Kirkham and David Thoms (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1995), pp. 13-28.

[138] For more on British dress during the Second World War see: Peter McNeil, ''Put Your Best Face Forward': The Impact of the Second World War on British Dress', *Journal of Design History* 6:4 (1993), pp. 283-299.

[139] Kirkham, 'Beauty and Duty', p. 25.

advertisement was a sketch of the female body composed of salad vegetables for limbs and body parts. Similar, to 'The Green Man' (Figure 1.8) in that it too anthropomorphises vegetables as constituents of the body, this entertaining approach to linking the body with healthy eating, while not focussed on the 'real' lived body of the female, was constructing the healthy body in new and interesting ways. The choice of vegetables used to assemble the female 'body' – a cabbage leaf as a full skirt, a radish torso, carrot legs and marrow arms – created a particular 'feminine' shape. The image emphasised a nipped in waist through the positioning of the radish atop the cabbage leaves. Notably, it yet again privileged cabbage, reinforcing its importance within the rhetoric of 'Dig for Victory', and indeed eat for victory. The interlocking nature of these vegetables imitating the 'look' of the generic female body referenced the primacy of the hourglass figure within contemporary culture. This understanding of beauty, style and the female body symbolically defined the feminine in terms of an idealised hourglass body with an emphasis on breasts and hips.[140]

This visual construction of women would continue following the decontrol of clothing in the 1950s and the postwar ultra-feminine ideal of full skirts and slim waists. In other modes of propaganda, women were continually reminded of how femininity was constructed in 'normal times' and the importance of glamour to upholding the tenets of pre-war gender norms. In particular, the Ministry of Information utilised notions of glamour to establish physical appearance as instrumental to maintaining pre-existing understandings of women and their place within the social order.[141] Thus, this advertisement contributed to traditional female values based on appearance, while it substituted the very different social environment

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[140] McNeil, ''Put Your Best Face Forward'', p. 296.

[141] The 'Eve in Overalls' pamphlet on women's contributions to the war effort emphasised the 'well-cared for hands and hair' of women factory workers. Moreover, they 'have not given up their necklaces nor their bracelets nor their lipsticks'. For more see: Rose, *Which People's War*, pp. 130-131.

in which the advertisement was produced to enable its continued perpetuation. The large-scale conscription of women for war work from April 1941 resulted in a significant distortion of gender difference, with women now undertaking roles usually identified as specifically male.[142] In addition, the emergence of women in uniform marked a great departure in the appearance of women in public.[143] Consequently, the primary visual component of this advertisement referenced a 'look' of femininity that was not only impossible to achieve in reality (due to the clothing shortage and utility scheme), but was linked to women's contributions to the war effort in terms of beauty and personal appearance, while it ignored the widespread role of uniforms in constructing a visual 'look' for women in relation to war work.

Such advertisements were largely centred on providing textual information, advising women on how to make use of their rations in inventive and timesaving ways. They borrowed from the layout and design of the contemporary magazine advice column as another site upon which the Ministry of Food imposed a discussion linking beauty, femininity and food. Throughout the 1930s, women's magazines, in particular *Woman's Own* and later *Woman*, adopted a 'pseudo-scientific' approach to domesticity (in that it forwarded tenets of scientific motherhood and assumed that women needed constant coaching and guidance in fulfilling the magazine's values).[144] Within this context, a combination of anecdotes and observations from readers and columns by resident 'experts' reinforced the value of domesticity.[145]

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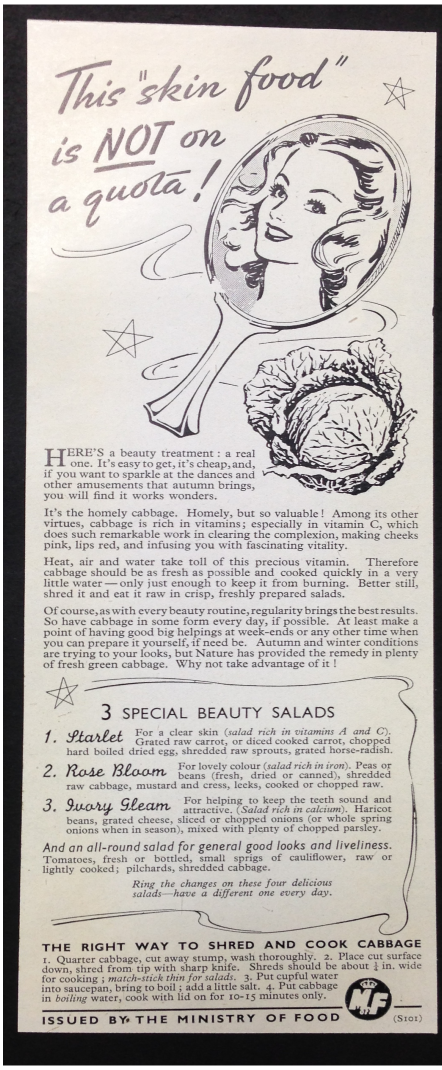
[142] For example, female deployment at anti-aircraft batteries.

[143] For more on the social implications of women in uniform see: Penny Summerfield, *Reconstructing Women's Wartime Lives: Discourse and Subjectivity in Oral History* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998); Lucy Noakes, *Women in the British Army: War and the gentle sex, 1907-1948* (Oxford: Routledge, 2006); McNeil, ''Put Your Best Face Forward'', pp. 288-290.

[144] Jill Greenfield and Chris Reid, 'Women's Magazines and the Commercial Orchestration of Femininity in the 1930s: Evidence from Woman's Own', *Media History* 4:2 (1998), pp. 161-174.

[145] Greenfield and Reid, 'Women's Magazines and the Commercial Orchestration of Femininity', p. 164.



This "skin food" is NOT on a quota!

HERE'S a beauty treatment: a real one. It's easy to get, it's cheap, and, if you want to sparkle at the dances and other amusements that autumn brings, you will find it works wonders.

It's the homely cabbage. Homely, but so valuable! Among its other virtues, cabbage is rich in vitamins; especially in vitamin C, which does such remarkable work in clearing the complexion, making cheeks pink, lips red, and infusing you with fascinating vitality.

Heat, air and water take toll of this precious vitamin. Therefore cabbage should be as fresh as possible and cooked quickly in a very little water — only just enough to keep it from burning. Better still, shred it and eat it raw in crisp, freshly prepared salads.

Of course, as with every beauty routine, regularity brings the best results. So have cabbage in some form every day, if possible. At least make a point of having good big helpings at week-ends or any other time when you can prepare it yourself, if need be. Autumn and winter conditions are trying to your looks, but Nature has provided the remedy in plenty of fresh green cabbage. Why not take advantage of it!

3 SPECIAL BEAUTY SALADS

1. **Starlet** For a clear skin (*salad rich in vitamins A and C*). Grated raw carrot, or diced cooked carrot, chopped hard boiled dried egg, shredded raw sprouts, grated horse-radish.
2. **Rose Bloom** For lovely colour (*salad rich in iron*). Peas or beans (fresh, dried or canned), shredded raw cabbage, mustard and cress, leeks, cooked or chopped raw.
3. **Ivory Gleam** For helping to keep the teeth sound and attractive. (*Salad rich in calcium*). Haricot beans, grated cheese, sliced or chopped onions (or whole spring onions when in season), mixed with plenty of chopped parsley.

And an all-round salad for general good looks and liveliness. Tomatoes, fresh or bottled, small sprigs of cauliflower, raw or lightly cooked; pilchards, shredded cabbage.

Ring the changes on these four delicious salads—have a different one every day.

THE RIGHT WAY TO SHRED AND COOK CABBAGE

1. Quarter cabbage, cut away stump, wash thoroughly. 2. Place cut surface down, shred from tip with sharp knife. Shreds should be about ¼ in. wide for cooking; *match-stick thin for salads.* 3. Put cupful water into saucepan, bring to boil; add a little salt. 4. Put cabbage in *boiling* water, cook with lid on for 10-15 minutes only.

ISSUED BY THE MINISTRY OF FOOD (S101)

Eating for HEALTH and BEAUTY

You cannot expect to look attractive to others if you "don't feel up to much" yourself, can you? No. Good looks and good health go hand in hand. And food plays a leading part in both.

A well chosen diet, just the right balance of BODY-BUILDERS — eggs, meat, milk, fish, cheese, dried beans, peas, etc. — of ENERGY FOODS — bread, flour, potatoes, grain foods, sugar, jam, dried fruits; margarine, butter, cooking fat — and of PROTECTIVE FOODS — green vegetables and fruits — will mean a trim figure, no overweight, a good complexion and nice hair.

There is a helpful booklet, recently published, called "Health and Beauty in War-time." Why not send a postcard for it to the Ministry of Food, Food Advice Division, London, W.1. *Meantime, here are some pointers for you:*

Breakfast Always have some builder (milk, or dried eggs, or fish, fresh or canned) and some energiser (porridge, fried potatoes or bread). Rushing out on an empty stomach or on a cup of tea and a slice of bread and butter or toast is bad for both your looks and your health.

Mid-day Meal It is most important for you to have a real good meal at mid-day. A meal including meat, or eggs, cheese or fish, *and green vegetables* for certain: then anything else you fancy. If you can't get home, have your mid-day meal at your canteen, or a British Restaurant if there's one near you. Buns and tea are all very well for 'elevenses' or tea-time, but *not* for your mid-day meal. If you must take your mid-day meals with you, remember that each meal should include: 1. a builder; 2. a protector, such as fruit, when you can get it, a raw vegetable salad in a container, or salad sandwiches; 3. Energy food, which generally looks after itself in bread, pastry, turnover, cake, etc.

HERE IS A SUGGESTION FOR ONE PACKED MEAL

Turnover filled with sausage meat, cooked dried peas, herbs, parsley, and chopped leek or onion. Raw cabbage salad in a screw-top jar. Oatmeal scones and jam.

Evening Meal Here again, try to get in a builder, a protector, and an energiser. For example, an omelette or scrambled eggs, made with dried eggs, is a first-class builder. Add some lightly cooked green vegetables or a salad—some watercress or mustard and cress is excellent—and some fried potatoes or bread and margarine, and you have a perfect meal. So easy, too, and a boon if you have to prepare your own meal.

For a bed-time drink, try soup sometimes for a change.

EXTRAS FOR THE UP TO 18's

If you are under 18 you are entitled to half a pint of milk a day. Also you should be able to get National Milk Cocoa where you work. The price will be not more than 1d. per cup. If you are not getting it, why not ask about it? Both milk and National Milk Cocoa are valuable foods and great helps to appearance as well as health. It's worth while to have your full share of them.

ISSUED BY THE MINISTRY OF FOOD (S89)

(L-R) Figure 1.11: 'This "skin food" is NOT on a quota!'(TNA MAF 223/21), c. 1945.
Figure 1.12: 'Eating for Health and Beauty' (TNA MAF 223/21), c. 1945.

It was within this latter tradition, of expert advice, that these Ministry of Food advertisements (Figures 1.11 and 1.12) paid homage. While they included only small accompanying images, these depictions of women in wartime were important in contextualising the health advice of the column more generally. Figure 1.11 depicted the reflection of a woman through a hand-held mirror. Its positioning within the visual plane alongside a cabbage linked the consumption of such leafy greens with healthy, clear skin. The accompanying tagline 'This skin food is NOT on a quota!' drew attention to the role of non-rationed produce as 'buffer' foods for maintaining good health and attaining sufficient nutritional and energy requirements.

Cookery had been a major preoccupation of women's magazines long before the outbreak of war, and the instigation of food control only increased their popularity as a source of advice and help for housewives. As Jill Greenfield and Chris Reid revealed, even before the war, articles emphasising women's appearance accounted for nearly half of all those published in *Woman's Own* between 1932 and 1939, with cookery, housekeeping and lifestyle issues contributing just over one-tenth of all articles.[146] As staples of the magazine format, beauty and cookery articles were mutually supportive during the war. The publication of advertisements such as 'Eating for health and beauty' (Figure 1.12) by the Ministry of Food contributed to the conflation of cooking, eating and personal appearance, especially as shortages intensified and women became increasingly inventive in overcoming a lack of consumer beauty products and foodstuffs.[147]

Central to qualities associated with femininity, and promoted by the wartime state, was the expectation that women should perceive their natural and permanent role to be that of wife and mother. The introduction of national service for women was particularly important in prompting increased governmental visualisations of women as committed to traditional societal roles even in the face of exceptional circumstances. Female war work was largely seen as 'unfeminine', so to counteract this perception recruitment campaigns emphasised that membership of the forces could be a 'womanly activity'.[148] Contemporary fears about an emerging 'masculinisation' of women, in marked contrast to their wife and mother-centred

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[146] Greenfield and Reid, 'Women's Magazines and the Commercial Orchestration of Femininity', pp. 168-169.

[147] For example, beetroot juice was used in place of lipstick and gravy browning for leg tint.

[148] Lucy Noakes, 'War and Peace', in *Women in Twentieth Century Britain*, ed. by Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska (Harlow: Pearson Education, 2001), pp. 307-320.

societal roles, were met with increased governmental propaganda that suggested women could be attractive and feminine, even in uniform.[149] The boundary between the male and female worker was epitomised by the ban on women using weapons for fears that allowing them to handle firearms would jeopardise their womanly characteristics.[150] Therefore amidst serious concerns that the gender-specific societal role of women and the family would be inextricably altered by the wartime experience, it was perhaps unsurprising that governmental publicity often focused on bridging perceptions of women in the home and their specific roles at work. Thus, food became an important site on which issues of femininity, gender roles and domesticity could be discussed, portrayed and ideally accepted. I will demonstrate that within this milieu, representations within this food and health publicity material attempted to instil ideas that patriotic commitment was necessary only for the 'duration' and that the preservation of femininity was essential.

As seen in Figure 1.13, this newly emerging role of women as important assets to the wartime economy through their national service was ironically used to construct them as feminine and womanly. As the government attempted to encourage increased female participation in the workforce in light of chronic underemployment, this leaflet attempted to reconcile traditional female domestic and maternal functions with the important roles that women now performed for the war effort.

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[149] Rose, *Which People's War?,* p. 123.

[150] Noakes, 'War and Peace', p. 310.

The right foods and how to choose them

GENERAL RULES TO REMEMBER WHEN PLANNING YOUR DIET:

1. Eat all your rations, not forgetting milk and cheese.

2. Eat a serving of correctly cooked vegetables daily and a serving of raw vegetable.

3. Fill up the corners with the unrationed energy foods. Make sure of one serving, or preferably two, of potatoes every day.

ISSUED BY THE MINISTRY OF FOOD

W.R.R. & Son Ltd. 3-1535 November, 1943.

Health and beauty in war-time

All Girls want to be healthy, fit and beautiful. Correct food plays a very important part in reaching this ideal.

How are you to know whether your meals are correctly planned or not? To answer this question you should know the part food plays in the working of the body.

All the different kinds of foods can be placed in one of three groups:

I. Fuel or energy foods
II. Body building and repairing foods.
III. Protective foods.

Some foods, such as milk and potatoes, go into more than one group.

The foods which belong to each group, and their uses to the body, are explained in this folder

Figure 1.13: 'The Right Foods and How to Choose Them' and 'Health and Beauty in Wartime' (Wellcome Library, London L0067666), 1943.

It visually depicted five different representations of the working-woman in uniform, which was itself an important icon within female national conscription. Thus, the pamphlet fulfilled an important function in reconciling women in uniformed dress and the governmental concern that they needed to maintain 'the allure of their sex'.[151] Foods were appropriated in this mission to defend and sustain prewar conceptions of femininity and sexuality. Hence, the maintenance of an adequate diet whilst simultaneously preserving female physical attractiveness was portrayed as an important ancillary activity to their wartime work. Particular foods were associated with certain beneficial effects on appearance and were consequently attributed with a dual function. For example, green, leafy vegetables were promoted as complexion-enhancing, which allowed the state to propagate these easily available, healthy and filling foods as cosmetic aids. Similarly, the link between increasing domestic

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[151] Arthur Waters, *Eve in Overalls*, Ministry of Information pamphlet, 1942.

production and physical beauty was a major theme in wartime publicity and was aimed specifically at a female audience during the war.[152]

By suggesting that the maintenance of physical attractiveness and femininity were necessary interests for women *even* in wartime, publicity material such as *The Right Foods and How to Choose Them* established a discourse centred on the female body as beautiful. As Sonya Rose expounded, 'gender difference was so marked upon the body that it would be visible in spite of such masculine attire as uniforms and overalls'.[153] Consequently, glamour, beauty, clothing and the upholding of personal appearance were utilised by the state to strategically recruit women into factories whilst concurrently boosting productivity by raising morale on the home front. In utilising appearance as a key factor in publicity for war work, the government contributed to the construction of women as passive agents – that is the idea that all women by the very nature of their sex were inherently interested in personal appearance and attractiveness. Their depiction as beautiful and dutiful in many ways undermined the long hours and often dangerous work they conducted for the war effort. While married women with children were permitted to work reduced hours to maintain their traditional marital and mothering roles, single women bore the brunt of underemployment and labour shortages throughout the war. They often worked long hours for less pay than their pre-war male counterparts, yet governmental publicity still emphasised their concurrent duty to maintain their personal appearance.[154]

While this image was intrinsically entwined with concepts of femininity, beauty and war, it also served to illustrate the militarisation of food from a visual perspective. Women were now performing important roles in the WAAF, ARP, and the Land Army, amongst others. While food preparation was still placed firmly within

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[152] Rose, *Which People's War?,* pp. 134-136.
[153] Rose, *Which People's War*?, p. 135.
[154] Lucy Noakes, 'War and Peace', pp. 307-320.

the female domain, the Ministry of Food, and subsequently their publicity machine, increasingly recognised the position of women within the wartime work setting. The leaflet attempted to strike a balance between their traditional societal role and their new vital position within the wartime economy. By combining the imagery of the uniformed, mobilised female characters, with textual information regarding their domestic role, the MoF was attempting to reconcile the somewhat contradictory nature of contemporary gender roles that the war produced. Certainly with the introduction and later extension of conscription of women it now became less feasible for the MoF to produce publicity material that focussed so strongly on outmoded concepts of food purchase, preparation and cooking.[155]

Yet, what all these advertisements had in common was their focus on women as responsible for translating food policies into healthy meals and beauty-enriching products. They constructed women as responsible agents for enacting personal change for the benefit of the war effort. In this way, the visual components of these advertisements contributed to the construction of the individualised female, who was shaping individual identities that operated in parallel to the communal. They encouraged women to contribute to the war effort on an individualised level – by subscribing to culturally contingent understandings of beauty and what it was to be womanly and in doing so, forwarded the idea that they were ultimately contributing to the communal war effort. As Pat Kirkham argued, by linking femininity and personal appearance with morale and national identity amongst all women, an emphasis was placed on those aspects of culture that created individualised womanly identities.[156] The Second World War was unique in being the first in which women were

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[155] In particular, many women spent much of their day in queues for rationed goods. See: Paul Addison, *Now the War is Over: A Social History of Britain 1945-1951* (London: Pimlico, 1995), p. 31; Penny Summerfield, *Women Workers in the Second World War: Production and Patriarchy in Conflict* (London: Routledge, 1989), p. 13; Moran, ‘Queuing up in Post-War Britain’, pp. 283-305.

[156] Kirkham, ‘Beauty and Duty’, pp. 13-28.

conscripted to war service and thus they negotiated the complexities of being a woman and war worker while maintaining civilian morale both on and off duty. Indeed, the uniform itself, which compelled homogeneity amongst all wearers, was often the site of performed individualities with distributed uniforms altered to fit the figure better.[157] Women in uniform took beauty and duty seriously and women's magazines often featured advice on how to look good.[158] In this specific context of life on the home front, the individual was repeatedly identified by government publicity as a site for personal change, personal enactment of policy and personal support for the extraordinary level of governmental intervention over individual freedoms during the war.

Conclusion

This chapter has argued that the development of wartime food publicity ensured a visibility of food and health issues in general British society. The war created a discourse around food propaganda that would continue, albeit in new and different ways, during the postwar period. I suggested that the war was therefore crucial in creating a governmental-led discourse around food and health that would continue throughout the rest of the century. While wartime initiatives were largely concentrated on efforts to increase food production, sway consumers towards new (and often unpopular) foods, and to reinforce the idea that women were the natural and accepted planners of grocery shopping, meal planning and cooking, certain postwar programmes would come to focus largely on the health dynamic of food. Health and food became increasingly conflated within the 'affluent' society, and as

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[157] Kirkham, 'Beauty and Duty', p. 25.
[158] McNeil, ''Put Your Best Face Forward'', p. 288-290.

we will see in later chapters, the lifting of state control of the food supply slowly permitted the emergence of differing disease types to come to the fore within British public health. Policies centred on the diminution of deficiency diseases were gradually superseded by concerns regarding the huge rise in chronic disease types that were effecting ever-greater numbers of the adult population. In ways similar to the vitamins revolution of the early twentieth century, epidemiologists, physicians and scientists, together, sought for causal factors and within this context the importance of food became paramount. Incorporating into the concurrent rise in risk-factor epidemiology centred on lifestyle choice and individualism, food and disease were re-marketed by both the state and the food industry as important components of disease prevention and health maintenance.

Within the wartime context, food publicity focused largely on maintaining pre-existing gender roles in society while encouraging food prudence, creativity in cooking and increased food production at an individual level. Combining the dual purpose of making food control a workable governmental policy for the duration of the war and beyond, while protecting the unity and consistency of the 'nation', established the primacy of gender difference. By combining images and varying amounts of text within each individual campaign piece, MoF publicity during the war enabled a high level of contextualisation to be achieved while reinforcing the supposed factuality of its premise. Such material constituted a plea to 'reality', not rhetoric, in an attempt to present a controlled depiction of those health issues that threatened the wellbeing of the general population. Undoubtedly the Second World War made the home visible. As food was a fundamental aspect of family and home life, the extent of state interference into this relationship ensured that food publicity, too, forged an important part of civilian wartime experience.

The specific symbolism employed within the composition of health education materials relied on a very particular form of visual representation that reflected the social and cultural climate from which they stemmed. Homogenous perceptions of society and familial duties, according to a combination of governmental and military concepts, were reiterated repeatedly through government health advertising campaigns. Individual responsibility for choosing the right foods to eat as a workingwoman was presented as vital. This new female role was textually reinforced with reminders to fill up on un-rationed energy foods, particularly potatoes.[159] Whilst working for the collective good of the nation, it was still imperative that individuals within their own social and economic situation were acquiescent citizens, operating according to a very particular set of wartime food conventions. It was in this way that private acts of eating became entrenched with a more general war effort. By mobilising women, the values of nutrition, food and diet were more firmly entrenched within the realm of state administration.

As I will explore in the coming chapters, many of the tropes centred on gender and individualism, which were present in the wartime context, did not disappear as the focus of governmental health publicity changed. Rather, they became incorporated within new campaigning material that again utilised specific visual metaphors for displaying health information. This emergence of large-scale nutrition education merged with the postwar growth in consumerism and changing market-forces. Therefore, the wartime scenario provided important contextual policy developments which became increasingly apparent as health policy became ever more reliant on health education and publicity material to forward information pertaining to food and health. Certainly as the 'silver bullet' approach to medicine and disease treatment

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[159] Between 1942 the Ministry of Food ran a potato publicity campaign aimed at increasing consumption of potatoes for energy rather than bread. TNA MAF 86/382, 'Potato publicity campaign', 1942-1943; TNA MAF 86/391, 'Potato publicity campaign', 1943-1944.

ceased to be a workable model in the postwar period, increased reliance on those types of promotions, seen to be successful during the wartime years, was perhaps unsurprising.

While individualism within health care has oftentimes been perceived as a postwar phenomenon, this chapter has forcefully argued for the reconsideration of the role of the individual within wartime food policy. Rather than merely accepting the position of communality within the Second World War narrative, this chapter has sought to trace this rise of individualism within the wartime context. I have suggested that despite state control of the food supply and the perception of a ‘People’s War’, factors were still at work which valued the individual above that of the community. Rather than perceiving the war as a period of departure in food and health policy, which purely centred on the importance of communality in society, the role of the individual was still being devised in new and interesting ways. The wartime context was important in establishing the individual as responsible for his or her own health status. The postwar focus on individual responsibility for health and behavioural change in nutrition education was implicitly coded in wartime propaganda and its content influenced by the wartime context of food scarcity. Therefore, as my following chapters will assert, the individual in society as an important tool of food and health policy was not a newly constructed character in this narrative but instead was emerging from the shadows of entrenched wartime propaganda objectives to a newly promoted status within the postwar health context.

2

‘Why You’ll Want Blue Band if You’ve Just Bought a New Refrigerator’: Public Health and Postwar Consumerism, 1954-1968

Things are looking UP! Last year 448,646 housewives became new refrigerator owners. You may be one of them. For those people (and for you, too, if you want the very best) only Blue Band will do. Blue Band – 2/6d. per *pound* packet–the luxury margarine.

WHY YOU’LL WANT BLUE BAND
IF YOU’VE JUST
BOUGHT A NEW REFRIGERATOR

THIS IS BLUE BAND. The luxury margarine. The margarine that is specially made for the refrigerator. (And even if you don’t own a fridge – you’ll love Blue Band for its luxury qualities !)

Have you a new refrigerator? Then this is why only Blue Band will do for you. It spreads perfectly. Not just when it’s at room temperature. But the very second that you take it out of that ice-cold refrigerator. *Really* spreads. You don’t have to remember to take it out before you want to use it. And Blue Band spreads so easily that you always save time with it. The luxury margarine.

Do you care about the taste of things? Then this is why only Blue Band will do for you. Blue Band tastes creamy. Blue Band is rich. Blue Band adds a wonderful fresh, appetising touch wherever it’s used. Not at all like any other margarine you’ve ever tasted. The luxury margarine.

Are you practical? With a new refrigerator you’ll be saving shopping time – buying enough to last you a week at a go. That’s why Blue Band is packed in *pound* packets (enough to last a whole week). But note that in that pound packet the quarters are already divided up – ready for use. Each in its own golden-foil wrapped packet. The luxury margarine.

2/6
PER POUND PACKET

BLUE BAND LUXURY MARGARINE

VBB-17-8945-6

3A313 11 x 5⅝ Final Proof

Proof from S. H. BENSON LTI

Figure 2.5: ‘Why You’ll Want Blue Band if You’ve Just Bought a New Refrigerator’, (Unilever Archives MD/AL 107/1 – B10309), 1959.

'Why You'll Want Blue Band if You've Just Bought a New Refrigerator', exclaimed this Blue Band advertisement from the late 1950s.[1] Published by Unilever P.L.C., it comprised of one main image occupying the top half of the advertisement, a smaller secondary image of the product in the right-hand corner and a considerable amount of explanatory text.[2] By depicting the central figure of a young, married housewife within the foreground and the new, open (and empty) refrigerator in the background, this advertisement raises important questions about the role of food, gender, new modes of food technology, and their possible implications for eating habits in the postwar period. The visual focus on the smiling, female figure, displaying the Blue Band package, when combined with the caption, linked the new 'luxury' margarine brand with the latest consumerist developments. Margarine had been previously associated with wartime (and postwar) rationing and as such a less favourable replacement for butter.[3] In attempts to overcome this association, Unilever advertised its postwar margarine brands in terms of modernity, taking advantage of a proliferation of new domestic appliances within British homes in order to increase their market share.

With the young housewife the central visual element of this advertisement she visually and textually connected the refrigerator with new products themselves 'made for the refrigerator'.[4] During the 1950s, ownership of refrigerators trebled in Britain. Although still largely confined to the lower-middle and middle classes, John Rule

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[1] TNA MAF 260/63: *Blue Band* newspaper advertisement headline, *Evening Standard*, 1 October 1959.

[2] This format was commonplace for newspaper advertisements during this period. See: Sean Nixon, 'Apostles of Americanisation?: J. Walter Thompson Company Ltd., Advertising and Anglo-American Relations, 1945-67', *Contemporary British History* 22:4 (2008), pp. 477-499.

[3] TNA, MAF 138/151, 'Ministry of Food: Finance Department, Margins Committee. Margarine', 1942-1954; TNA MAF 101/967, 'Ministry of Food: Services Department, Food Standards Group', 1943-1954'; TNA MAF 99/83 'Ministry of Food: Services Department, Distribution Group, rationing division, margarine and butter ration level', 1939-1941; TNA MAF 99/885, 'Ministry of Food: Services Department, Distribution Group, rationing division, margarine and butter ration level', 1940-1942;

[4] Unilever reinforced Blue Band's status as the 'luxury margarine' six times in the text elements of this advertisement.

argued that from the mid-1950s more working class families were able to buy household items such as refrigerators, vacuum cleaners and washing machines than ever before, thanks in many instances to hire purchase agreement.[5] In this way, across a wide section of British society, items like the refrigerator were important in reconstructing new expectations about 'normal' living and were framed as constitutive of modern domesticity.[6] The advertisement established margarine as not only luxurious (in part due to its 'look' – its gold foil outer package and individually wrapped quarter-pounds of margarine) but also as 'modern', a product that capitalised on the rise of those new home technologies that altered food consumption patterns and shopping practices. Indeed, I suggest that this initial postwar framing of margarine as 'modern' by manufacturers and advertisers had profound implications on the alignment of butter substitutes with health (rather than disease), another arguably 'modern' trope within postwar consumer culture.

This chapter will examine the rise in new ways of thinking about food in relation to health by examining the visual components of product advertising for margarine alongside governmental health education during the 1950s and 1960s. It will examine how the postwar environment gave rise to new ways of advertising food, and how these in turn promoted innovative visualisations of food, the body and their (often implicit) interactions with health. This chapter adopts a twofold approach, analysing both the advertising of Unilever's Blue Band and Stork margarines, and governmental health education material, to examine the multiple and varying interests which were shaping food advertising and food policy during this period. This

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[5] John Rule, 'Time, affluence and private leisure: the British working class in the 1950s and 1960s', *Labour History Review* 66:2 (2001), pp. 223-242. The rise of hire purchase agreements during this period did much to facilitate the rapid increase in domestic appliance purchases during this period.

[6] Rule, 'Time, affluence and private leisure', p. 234. Helen Watkins, 'Beauty Queen, Bulletin Board and Browser: Rescripting the refrigerator', *Gender, Place and Culture: A Journal of Feminist Geography* 13:2 (2006), pp. 143-152.

approach allows me to expose how commercial entities were appropriating the emergent tenets of individualism to sell products and lifestyles.

After more than a decade of food rationing in Britain, the mid-1950s represented a period of liberated consumer choice and consumerism expanded rapidly. This had profound effects on governmental health policy and its relationship with both the food industry and the function of health education within postwar society. This chapter will address the wartime rise of the individual, outlined in Chapter One, and tie this development to the emergence of epidemiologically based public health systems. By investigating Unilever's branded margarine products before the launch of Flora as their main branded margarine for health, I explore how the visual elements of advertising for Blue Band and Stork implicitly referenced naturalness, healthiness and freshness. While Chapter Four will later discuss how Flora was marketed explicitly in terms of disease prevention and coronary heart disease, this chapter analyses the postwar margarine advertising tradition upon which these later campaigns were founded.[7] Building on and extending the work of Virginia Berridge and Kelly Loughlin on health education campaigns, this chapter similarly argues for the importance of mass media and marketing within public health more generally.[8] In applying the methodologies of visual analysis to the advertising and publicity output of Unilever and central government, this chapter argues for the role of commercial entities (alongside government) in circulating ideas about food and

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[7] I will focus on the marketing of Blue Band and Stork as examples of the different socio-economic groups targeted by Unilever. It will also provide the context for the later marketing of Flora margarine as the first specifically promoted 'health' margarine.

[8] For more on postwar public health in Britain see: Virginia Berridge and Kelly Loughlin, 'Smoking and the new health education in Britain, 1950s-1970s', *American Journal of Public Health*, 95 (2005), pp. 956-964; Kelly Loughlin, 'Networks of Mass Communication: Reporting Science, Health and Medicine in the 1950s and 1960s', in *Making Health Policy: Networks in Research and Policy After 1945*, ed. by Virginia Berridge (Amsterdam: Rodopi Press, 2005), pp. 295-322; Kelly Loughlin and Virginia Berridge, 'Whatever Happened to Health Education? Mapping the Grey Literature Collection Inherited by NICE', *Social History of Medicine* 21:3 (2008), pp. 561-572; Kelly Loughlin, ''Your Life in their Hands': The context of a medical-media controversy', *Media History* 6:2 (2000), pp. 177-188.

health. This chapter examines the revisualisation of margarine as a value added product with distinct user benefits, marking a distinct departure from its wartime association with food rationing. By treating such images as forms of communication, I will examine the role of visual representations in promoting socio-culturally contingent understandings of food in relation to gender, class and practices of consumption.

By analysing governmental and commercial efforts concurrently I draw important thematic parallels, emphasising a visual rhetoric linking these campaigns with their wartime predecessors and their health-centred successors in the 1970s and 1980s. In this respect, such campaigns revealed postwar anxieties about gender and the body, which became important themes in selling new modes of health behaviour as the century progressed. By treating these images as important agents for transmitting new ideas about eating, shopping and health, I reveal their role in translating the language of nutrition into the household environment.

This chapter will first provide contextual background necessary for understanding both Unilever's advertisements and governmental health campaigning in the 1950s and 1960s within wider political and cultural developments. In particular I discuss the gendering of food and domestic appliances as feminine, changes in food consumption, and the postwar development of public health. I then analyse the advertising output of Unilever's Blue Band and Stork margarines during the 1950s to interrogate those visual vocabularies used to sell food, health and new lifestyles to consumers. I will examine ways in which these advertisements visually constructed contemporary notions of gender, domesticity and modernity. Finally, I investigate governmental health education campaigns focused on diet and nutrition, drawing parallels with their wartime predecessors in their focus on maternal and infant health to the exclusion of other societal groups. Ultimately, this chapter analyses images because they reveal other public sites in which contemporary understandings of diet, disease, the gendering of food and how these dovetail with wider constructions of modernity were disseminated. It is these understandings that this Chapter seeks to decode, analyse and expose in relation to the food industry and new models of health education in postwar Britain.

Discourses of Gender: Feminising Food

Much historical research has focused on understandings of women as gendered beings, especially in relation to the kitchen, food, eating practices and the introduction of new technological apparatuses into the realm of the home.[9] These studies have focused largely on gender and technology as relational categories produced through their manufacture and use. Feminist researchers have demonstrated how masculine interests are identifiable in technical choices within the home, often subordinating the interests of women.[10] Cynthia Cockburn and Susan Ormrod have argued that this marked a shift from a 'mesmerized gaze on the ineluctable effects of technology to an investigative and sceptical concern with human actors'.[11] Nonetheless, objects associated with certain tasks and spaces carried normative gender messages; it was therefore unsurprising that during the immediate postwar years, the refrigerator in particular was coded as feminine, as well as efficient, modern and time-saving. Ellen Lupton has argued for the role of advertising and design in representing machines as

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[9] Sherrie Inness, *Kitchen Culture in America: Popular Representations of Food, Gender and Race* (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001); Cynthia Cockburn and Susan Ormrod, *Gender and Technology in the Making* (London: Sage, 1993); Judy Wajcman, *Feminism Confronts Technology* (Cambridge: Polity, 1991).

[10] Ruth Schwartz Cowan, 'How the refrigerator got its hum', in *The Social Shaping of Technology*, ed. by Donald A. MacKenzie and Judy Wajcman (Buckingham: Open University Press, 1985), pp. 202-218. See also: Ruth Schwartz Cowan, *More Work for Mother: the ironies of household technology from the open hearth to the microwave* (New York: Basic Book, 1983).

[11] Cockburn and Ormrod, *Gender and Technology in the Making*, p. 8.

extensions of, or substitutes for, human bodies: the ‘design and promotion of machines … borrow[ing] physical and emotional attributes from women, making domestic appliances … glamorous but hard-working brides themselves’.[12] In such ways, the Blue Band advertisement that opened this chapter (Figure 2.1) feminised the fridge, suggesting its equivalent gendered role within the kitchen, not only responsible for organising and feeding, but also looking attractive, stylish and modern. This advertisement both visually and textually deliberately targeted the refrigerator-owning housewife (and those who aspired to own one). The female figure shared the visual plane with the refrigerator (no other object or actor appeared) and although it is positioned far in the background, the accompanying text box affirmed its importance within the female-dominated domestic environment: ‘Last year 448,646 housewives became new refrigerator owners. You may be one of them. For those people (and for you too, if you want the very best) only Blue Band will do.’ The textual identification of the housewife plainly linked the refrigerator with women, and domestic women specifically. By suggesting that they would ‘want the very best’, the advertisement covertly associated this home technology with women as ‘house proud’, and conformed to Lupton’s assertion that such an advertisement contributed to the making of domestic appliances as ‘glamorous [and] hardworking brides’.[13]

As argued by Sherrie Inness, women’s roles were often shaped by a ‘kitchen culture’ encompassing the various discourses about food, cooking and gender relations that stemmed from the kitchen yet pervaded wider aspects of society. It was these discourses, she suggested, that influenced advertising, women’s magazines, cookery literature and daily meals.[14] By singling out the role of advertisements within

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[12] Ellen Lupton, *Mechanical Brides: Women and Machines from Home to Office* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1993), p. 11.

[13] Lupton, *Mechanical Brides*, p. 11.

[14] Inness, *Kitchen Culture in America*, p. 3.

the process of instructing women on how to behave ‘correctly’, within dominant cultural norms, Inness exposed ingrained ideologies about women and their role as food providers and household managers. Other scholarly works, however, attempted to reach beyond the limits of advertising to locate the culture of food and gender in less well-analysed contexts such as confectionary, TV dinners or marital sex manuals.[15] In doing so, the role of images in advertisements and how they interacted with wider notions of gender and their relationship with food, domestic appliances and, increasingly, health were largely overlooked. Yet images of women, food and technology acted in complicated ways in constructing gender. Therefore, understanding how women interacted with food in cultural contexts remains important.

Less specialist historical research, which focused on feminism and the role of women within twentieth century society, has identified the role images can play in constructing women according to hierarchical concepts of gender, femininity and social roles particularly within consumer culture.[16] These analyses have highlighted the importance of the body and associated concerns about images in constructing men and women as gendered beings. Yet, they have largely failed to analyse the function of visual images in constructing women and their bodies as instructional and pedagogical tools. The identification of women as central sites for transmitting health information within advertising and health education publicity demonstrated their perceived importance in translating dietary and health information into practical

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[15] Innes, *Kitchen Culture*, p. 4.

[16] Much of this work has concentrated on the visible body. For example see: Mike Featherstone, ‘The Body and Consumer Culture’ *Theory, Culture and Society* 1 (1982), pp. 18, 21-22; Naomi Wolf, *The Beauty Myth: How Images of Beauty are Used Against Women* (London: Vintage, 1991); Susan Bordo, *Unbearable Weight: Feminism, Western Culture and the Body* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003); Victoria de Grazia and Ellen Furlough, *The Sex of Things: Gender and Consumption in Historical Perspective* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996).

home-based applications. The coding of women in food advertisements in the postwar period contributed to the association of women with certain modes of consumption particularly associated with cooking and domesticity, and revealed understandings about what the dominant culture admired as womanly and feminine.

Therefore, while health itself was later to be positioned as a consumer choice for all, the government already identified women as important agents in the transfer of health information from the state to the family. Understanding the socio-cultural contexts within which health-related knowledge and practices were constructed, coded and sometimes contested emphasised other dominant meanings aside from 'health' within food advertising. Gender norms, in particular, shaped personal and social identities in relation to diet alongside lifestyle choices. This changing food and eating landscape (in part enabled by new domestic appliances and modes of shopping in 1950s and 1960s Britain) facilitated the emergence of visual representations that emphasised traditional gender norms and home-centric female roles within both product advertising and health education yet framed these roles as new and 'modern'.

Postwar Food Policy and a Changing Food Consumption Landscape

As discussed in Chapter One, the conclusion of war in 1945 did little to alter the national political focus on food rationing and its corresponding visual persistence within British social life.[17] Rather than initiating a rapid lifting of food controls and the immediate resumption of economic competition, food markets remained static, controlled and limited. Bread rationing – first introduced in 1946 – perhaps most potently represented the nation's continued dependence on food restrictions to

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[17] See: Chapter One; Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska, *Austerity in Britain: Rationing, Controls and Consumption, 1939-1955* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); Joe Moran, 'Queuing Up in Post-War Britain', *Twentieth Century British History* 16:3 (2005), pp. 283-305; James Hinton, 'Militant Housewives: The British Housewives' League and the Attlee Government', *History Workshop Journal* 38: 1 (1994), pp. 129-56.

maintain economic stability and prevent rapid inflation during reconstruction.[18] As the decade continued, without a governmental commitment to ending austerity, issues of state management and food rationing were increasingly politicised.[19] Despite Labour's twin attempts at depoliticising food and governmental economic control during the election campaign of 1951, the Conservative electioneering focus was coded with concepts of national autonomy and with the long-awaited lifting of state control over the national economy, which by now had entered its second decade. Tory electoral success in 1951 offered a mandate to reintroduce economic competition and free access to goods and services.[20]

The Ministry of Food remained in operation until the final dismantling of the food rationing system in 1955, when it was subsumed into the MAF to become the

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[18] Zweiniger-Bargielowska, *Austerity in Britain*; Zweiniger-Bargielowska, 'Bread Rationing in Britain, July 1946- July 1948', *Twentieth Century British History* 4:1 (1993), pp. 57-85.

[19] Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska, 'Rationing, Austerity and the Conservative Party Recovery', *The Historical Journal* 37:1 (1994), pp. 173-197. *Britain Strong and Free: A statement of Conservative and Unionist Policy* was the Conservative Party election policy statement published as an in-depth accompaniment to its manifesto published as a pamphlet in October, 1951; http://www.conservativemanifesto.com/1951/1951-conservative-manifesto.shtml, accessed 13 August 2013; Labour Party Election Manifesto, 1951; http://www.politicsresources.net/area/uk/man/lab51.htm, accessed 13 August 2013.

[20] See: Martin Francis and Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska, *The Conservatives and British Society, 1880-1990* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1996). Conservative policy also included attempts to reduce expenditure on the 'weaker' social services, including all supplementary nutritional services. Using the justification that such benefits were economically unsustainable, the Conservatives moved to deregulate. Within the realm of health and nutrition, deregulation was followed by a slow policy retreat from large-scale food and nutritional responsibility. Charles Webster, 'Government Policy on School Meals and Welfare Foods, 1939-1970, in *Nutrition in Britain: Science, Scientists and Politics in the Twentieth Century*, ed. by David F. Smith (London: Routledge, 1997), p. 197; This retreat was accelerated by the emergent possibility in 1955 that governmental supplementation policies were possibly responsible for the emergence of a new nutritional disorder, hypercalcaemia (Hypercalcaemia was linked to high levels of calcium and vitamin D in the blood of infants and children). The Ministry of Health committed to reducing the levels of fortification required by government. By 1957, mandatory supplementation levels were altered, in line with both Ministry and Medical Research Council (MRC) recommendations, protecting the majority of the population from deficiency and excess at the risk of a minority suffering from deficiency. See: Roberta Bivins, '"The English Disease" or "Asian Rickets'? The Medical Response to Postcolonial Immigration', *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, 81:3 (2007), p. 544. The files of the MoH and the MAFF as well as the Division of Maternal and Child Welfare evidence these debates and emphasise the many intersections between, food and health policy at governmental level, the policy of food manufacturers, and widespread concerns about 'mass medication' and the public health. Such debates also fed into contemporary debates and concerns about fluoridation of water. See, e.g., TNA/PRO MH 55/2335, MH 55/2336, MAF 256/219.

Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF).[21] This departmental merger cemented an important alignment between the Ministry of Agriculture, rather than Health, with the development of food policy. Food became, in ministerial terms, attached to agricultural and economic concerns at the expense of its complex, yet direct relationship with health and disease. This new alliance had profound effects on the development of health education campaigns pertaining to food for the remainder of the twentieth century. Rather than rationalising campaigning initiatives and engaging in open collaboration in areas of mutual interest, the MAFF and the Ministry of Health functioned independently on matters of food publicity, resulting in discontinuities between their respective policies and publicity campaigns.[22]

While these policy developments and departmental realignments were being consolidated, significant changes were occurring in relation to food storage, food preservation methods and domestic appliances. British domestic consumers increasingly adopted American developments in food technology.[23] In the context of this 'Americanisation', a range of US business methods were applied to the retail sector.[24] Recent historical research has recognised the influence of 'Americanisation'

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[21] TNA, MAF 224/187, 'Ministry of Food merger', 1954; TNA MAF 224/188, 'Ministry of Food merger', 1954-1955; TNA T 223/272, 'Future of the Ministry of Food', 1955. R. Foster and J. Lunn, '40th Anniversary Briefing Paper: Food availability and our changing diet', British Nutrition Foundation, *Nutrition Bulletin* 32 (2007), p. 201.

[22] This disconnect was somewhat overcome through the work of independent government bodies responsible for large-scale, national health education from the 1970s onwards, namely the Health Education Council (HEC) and the Health Education Authority (HEA). Their predecessor, the Central Council for Health Education (CCHE), had focused on local initiatives and largely performed an advice-giving function to local authorities. As such the CCHE was not powerful enough to overcome ministerial disjuncture. See also: Max Blythe, 'A History of the Central Council for Health Education, 1927-1968' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Oxford, 1987).

[23] As a recipient of Marshall Plan aid Britain was required to introduce American-style business models into their reconstruction programme. See: Michael J. Hogan, *The Marshall Plan: America, Britain and the Reconstruction of Western Europe, 1947-1952* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987); William C. Cromwell, 'The Marshall Plan, Britain and the Cold War', *Review of International Studies* 8:4 (1982), pp. 233-249; Rhiannon Vickers, *Manipulating Hegemony: State Power, Labour and the Marshall Plan in Britain* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2000).

[24] This term, 'Americanisation', has been accepted as a twentieth century phenomenon based on the import of American technologies, business models, cultural attributes etc. initially into Western Europe, often with specific reference to the postwar period. It has been largely studied with regard to its relationship with Marshall Plan aid in postwar Europe. For more see: Susan Marling, *American*

in transforming aspects of British consumer society and in particular, the introduction of self-service retailing in grocery shops and the associated rise of the supermarket.[25] Both have been heralded as symbols of the postwar advance of consumerism.[26] The introduction of self-service grocery shopping marked an important departure in retail practices and as Joe Moran has noted, it helped alleviate the chronic problem of food queuing in 1950s Britain, which had been such an important visual symbol of austerity.[27] The rise of the supermarket and self-service grocery stores as the mainstay of the 'modern', reconstructed, postwar Britain went hand in hand with the growth of new consumer products. Pre-packaged and ready meals, marketed as 'convenience foods', were important to the development of new postwar eating cultures.[28] These changes were precipitated not only by the increasing marketing focus on convenience as a key distinctive feature of self-service shopping, but also by the growing number of American food and retail companies expanding into the British market.[29] Their introduction, and success, ensured that new ideas about food salesmanship and retail management influenced, altered and elicited competitive responses from their British counterparts.

Affair: The Americanisation of Britain (London: Boxtree, 1993); Jonathan Zeitlin and Gary Herrigel *Americanization and its Limits: Reworking US Technology and Management in Postwar Europe and Japan* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

[25] Self-service retailing involved customers picking pre-packed items from shelves without the assistance of a grocer and paying at tills placed by the exit to the shop. Rachel Bowlby, *Carried Away: The Invention of Modern Shopping* (London: Faber, 2000); Kim Humphrey, *Shelf Life: Supermarkets and the Changing Cultures of Consumption* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Ralph Jessen and Lydia Langer, *Transformations of Retailing in Europe since 1945* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012).

[26] Frank Trentmann, 'Consumer Society Revisited: Affluence, Choice and Diversity' in *Transformations of Retailing*, ed. by Jessen and Langer, p. 19.

[27] Joe Moran, 'Queuing Up in Post-War Britain', pp. 283-305. See also: David Kynaston, *Austerity Britain, 1945-1951* (London: Walker & Company, 2007).

[28] Oddy, *From Plain Fare to Fusion Food*, pp. 169-200.

[29] Gareth Shaw, Adrian Bailey, Andrew Alexander, Dawn Nell and Jane Hamlett, 'The Coming of the Supermarket: The Processes and Consequences of Transplanting American Know-How into Britain', in *Transformations of Retailing in Europe*, ed. by Jessen and Langer, p. 53. W. J. Reader, *Birds Eye: The Early Years* (Walton-on-Thames: Birds Eye Foods Ltd, 1963). Birds Eye was one of the first to make market gain in the realm of frozen foods but this was quickly followed by an influx of new companies including Eskimo Foods, Fropax, J. Lyons and Co, Ross Group and Findus in the 1950s.

There was also increased consumer demand for those foods that had previously been in such short supply. In particular, sugar consumption rose rapidly during these years; by 1960 Britain had the fifth highest per capita consumption in the world.[30] During the war, sugar had been constructed as an energy-giving food, vital for maintaining overall health. As such it had formed a central component of the four-food group model of nutritional guidelines developed during the early 1940s.[31] Its widespread availability following the end of rationing ensured that consumption remained above 500g per person per week until 1963.[32] Such changing food consumption patterns at population level reflected the altered postwar role of the government within the domain of food. No longer did the government deem it appropriate to impinge on the daily eating habits of the entire population. Instead decontrol prompted a different response in the sphere of food and nutrition. With central government no longer taking responsibility for the nutritional status of the *majority* population, the nutritional condition of those groups considered ‘vulnerable’ became central to Ministry of Health concerns. As discussed in Chapter One, infant, child and maternal health were important components of governmental health campaigning, especially in the context of food shortages. The government’s anxiety about deficiency did not cease with the end of rationing. Rather within the context of the newly created welfare state, infants, children and nursing mothers remained important targets of state health and nutrition policy.[33] Their continued inclusion in a variety of visual health education materials for welfare foods signalled the importance

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[30] Anne Murcott, ‘Food and nutrition in post-war Britain’ in James Obelkevich and Peter Catterall (eds), *Understanding post-war British society* (London, 1994), p. 157.

[31] See Chapter One for more on the development of food charts in wartime Britain.

[32] Oddy, *From Plain Fare to Fusion Food*, p. 201-203.

[33] Charles Webster has outlined how increases in the charge for school meals (justified due to the rising cost of raw materials) became part of a general retrenchment in the social services, which was hastened by the rising cost of British military participation in the Korean War. The beginnings of NHS service charges in 1949 and the cap on NHS expenditure represented parallel manifestations of this policy within central health planning. See: Webster, ‘Government Policy on School Meals and Welfare Foods’, p. 195.

that central government placed on infant health at a time when there was a general policy retreat in the realm of food and nutrition.

This policy retreat reflected a wider governmental need to make economies in the field of social services more generally while simultaneously combatting deficiency diseases. Throughout the 1950s the government increasingly viewed nutritional services as a major area of possible savings. In addition, nutritional supplements were now firmly aligned with the means-tested benefit system representing the negation of universality in the area of child health and nutrition. Indeed, as the 1960s and 1970s progressed, children as an all-encompassing 'vulnerable' category were instead replaced by a governmental focus on those specific children from low socio-economic backgrounds. In essence 'vulnerability' and nutritional services became politically attached to familial income and the benefits system. As central agencies increasingly withdrew from health regulation at national level, the government emphasised a policy focussed on health education and targeted public health interventions.[34] Wartime propaganda campaigns centred on health and nutrition had achieved national prominence and within the postwar context of deregulation, health education slowly assumed a renewed role within public health.[35]

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[34] See: Bivins, '"The English Disease" or "Asian Rickets'?, pp. 533-568; Roberta Bivins, 'Coming 'Home' to (post)Colonial Medicine: Treating Tropical Bodies in Post-War Britain', *Social History of Medicine* 26:1 (2013), pp. 1-20. At regular intervals the government incrementally increased the charge instituted for school meals and school milk. As an alternative, the Conservative government constructed Family Allowance as the major social welfare payment and this benefit increased periodically as a political manoeuvre to soften the blow of reduced supplementary nutritional services. By grafting governmental support regarding nutrition to Family Allowance payments, the government secured the piecemeal erosion of nutritional benefits without widespread political opposition. See: Webster, 'Government Policy on School Meals and Welfare Foods', pp. 190-213.

[35] See Chapter One; Berridge, *Marketing He*alth, pp. 71-75. This reorientation towards education at national level reflected continued commitment to health education initiatives at local level throughout the 1950s. For example see: Elizabeth Toon, ''Cancer as the General Population Knows It': Knowledge, Fear and Lay Education in 1950s Britain', *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 87:1 (2007), pp. 116-138.

The Consumer at Risk: A Changing Public Health Context

The gradual adoption of a policy position on the role of diet on disease aetiology has a complex history that impacted upon its inclusion within health education programmes.[36] It stemmed in part from the changing approaches to public health, changing modes of health surveillance, the position of the food industry and the very nature of the welfare state itself. Direct health education campaigns, which were focused on behaviour modification, represented one outcome of these important new approaches. Indeed, I posit that it was as these numerous stimuli coalesced in the 1950s and 1960s that health information services regarding health and nutrition warranted dedicated policy action. Yet, governmental responses remained slow and variable, with the Ministry of Health generally reluctant to introduce single-issue education campaigns based on persuading citizens to change socially entrenched habits.[37] Education was often centred on local efforts and many medical professionals opposed widespread education campaigns fearing they would foster fear and undermine medical authority.[38] While the Central Council for Health Education (CCHE) produced campaigning material that local initiatives could use in their own campaigns, they performed a largely advisory role. Ministry-approved national health education remained patchy and often relied on local support as the Ministry still remained committed to the belief that teaching GPs how to look for disease coupled with the merits of early intervention might prove more favourable than education alone.[39] This 'delay' narrative of central government in the 1950s has been criticised

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[36] This was also the case with regard to smoking and lung cancer, other cancers more generally and heart disease during 1950s Britain.

[37] For the smoking and lung cancer link see: Berridge, *Marketing Health* and Virginia Berridge and Kelly Loughlin, 'Smoking and the New Public Health Education in Britain 1950s-1970s', *American Journal of Public Health*, 95:6 (2005), 956-964.

[38] See: Moscucci, 'The British Fight Against Cancer', pp. 356-373; Toon, ''Cancer as the General Population Knows It'', pp. 116-138.

[39] Toon, 'Cancer as the General Population Knows It', pp. 125.

by historians, yet reflected complex reactions to fundamental changes within public health.[40]

During the immediate postwar period, a probabilistic approach to health emerged. This was epitomised by the growing scientific, political and social currency attributed to the concept of 'risk', with health and disease problematised in terms of behaviour. Luc Berlivet has emphasised that 'to take seriously as a legitimate public health problem, a concern has to be framed as a risk, through the mobilisation of the epidemiological way of reasoning, its techniques and tools'.[41] This epidemiological approach to health underpinned health policy in relation to changing patterns of disease and their scientific modes of assessment from the late 1940s. Alongside the emergence of quantitative methods to measure disease risk, national public health strategies incorporated the tenets of marketing - using the media to inculcate risk-avoidance behaviour in the population.[42]

This 'new public health' agenda emerged from pre- and postwar approaches to public health, advertising, mass consumption and emerging networks of evidence-policy-advice.[43] Berridge has attested to the influence of the scientific and medical connection between smoking and carcinoma of the lung on the development of postwar public health. She argued that this new relationship between risk-factor epidemiology and state policy-making succeeded in characterising profound alterations in public health; a shift termed the 'new public health'.[44] Prior to the Second World War, the British government had recognised the value of health

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[40] Berridge, *Marketing Health*, p. 34-51.

[41] Luc Berlivet, ''Association or Causation? The debate on the scientific status of risk factor epidemiology, 1947-c.1965', in Berridge (ed), *Making Health Policy*, p.40.

[42] Virginia Berridge, Marketing Health: Smoking and the Discourse of Public Health in Britain, 1945-2000 (Oxford, 2007), p. 1.

[43] For more see on this idea of evidence-policy-advice see: Kelly Loughlin, 'Whatever Happened to Health Education?: Mapping the Grey Literature Collection Inherited by NICE', *Social History of Medicine* 21:3 (2008), pp. 561-572; Loughlin, 'Networks of Mass Communication', pp. 295-322. It is useful here for discussing more generalist changes in governmental policy with regard chronic disease.

[44] Berridge, *Marketing Health*, p. 185-207.

publicity, yet remained reluctant to assume responsibility for it.[45] As outlined in Chapter One, the war acted as the necessary impetus for securing a strong governmental commitment to national publicity campaigning on a variety of subjects, while it facilitated a changing relationship between scientific findings and health policy. Scientists, economists, medical sociologists, among other 'experts', were now integrated into government planning processes to an unprecedented extent.[46] This alliance continued after the war with a variety of medical, statistical and sociological professionals reporting to government on a range of public health issues. Consequently, the role of the expert in advising government became a site of intersection between science and policy in the postwar period.[47]

In establishing a new risk-centred society, the government played a key role in both informing the public about particular health concerns and simultaneously emphasising the increased importance of research-based surveillance. As Ulrich Beck has explained, public sensitivity to health hazards and concepts of measurable risk were important in re-orientating political focus from institutions (pharmaceuticals, immunisation, health services etc.) to personal lifestyles.[48] This risk society was also an increasingly scientifically focussed one. Consequently, public health gradually became centred on conveying scientific ideas, theories and modes of explanation for a myriad of health problems to a largely lay public.

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[45] Virginia Berridge, 'Smoking and the New Health Education in Britain 1950s-1970s', *American Journal of Public Health* 95:6 (2005), pp. 956-964.

[46] Berridge, *Making Health Policy*, p. 3 and p. 9. The Central Health Services Council and its concomitant standing committees were the initial locales in which the science/policy relationship for both smoking and lung cancer and diet and heart disease were debated and contested during the 1950s.

[47] For the later reorganisation of the central health advisory machinery see: Berridge, *Marketing Health*, pp. 132-160. In the 1970s, more than a hundred central committees were reduced to just five with a committee of scientists or medical professionals in much closer working relationship with government. For more of this reorganisation in practice in relation to alcohol see: Betsy Thom, *Dealing with Drink. Alcohol and Social Policy: From Treatment to Management* (London: Free Association Books, 1999), pp. 120-125.

[48] Ulrich Beck, *Risk Society: Towards a New Modernity* (London: Thousand Oaks CA: Sage, 1992), p. 90.

Much historical literature has focused on the occupational uncertainty that plagued public health in the immediate postwar years.[49] In contrast, Virginia Berridge and Kelly Loughlin, have not only highlighted the regional and localised dimensions of public health practice but also re-orientated the research focus away from occupational disputes. Instead they have argued for the role of risk-factor epidemiology in changing the role of public health and its way of analysing disease.[50] Certainly, the establishment of the NHS in 1948 irreversibly changed the relationship between public health and local government. Partly stemming from continued struggles to overcome problems associated with the tripartite structure of the health services, the separation of preventive and curative medicine created yet another stumbling block for the success of public health in this period.[51] Within this context, two major approaches to public health emerged at local government level. The first focused on the more effective use of communication strategies, themselves an important aspect of the newly emerging postwar style of public health.[52] The second,

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[49] Public health lost much of its occupational status at local level after 1948, failing to capitalise on the mechanisms of the NHS. Jane Lewis, *What Price Community Medicine? The Philosophy, Practice and Politics of Public Health since 1919* (Brighton: Wheatsheaf, 1986); Charles Webster *The health services since the war: Vol. 1: Problems of health care: the National Health Service before 1957* (London: HMSO, 1988); John Welshman, 'The Medical Officer of Health in England and Wales, 1900-1974: Watchdog or Lapdog', *Journal of Public Health Medicine* 19:4 (1997), pp. 442-450; Dorothy Porter, *Social Medicine and Medical Sociology in the Twentieth Century* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1997).

[50] Berridge, *Marketing Health*; Berridge and Loughlin, 'Smoking and the New Health Education in Britain'; Berridge and Loughlin, *Medicine, the Market and the Mass Media*. For more on localised initiatives in the interwar period see: Alysa Levene, Martin Powell and John Stewart, 'Patterns of municipal health expenditure in interwar England and Wales', *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 78:3 (2004), pp. 635-669; Martin Gorsky, 'Public Health in interwar England and Wales: did it fail?', *Dynamis* 28 (2008), pp. 175-198 and for the 1950s see: Toon ''Cancer as the General Population Knows It'', pp. 116-138.

[51] The NHS was planned as a tripartite structure (Hospitals; Family Doctors, Dentists, Opticians and Pharmacists and Local Authority Health Services) with the Minister for Health at the top and three distinct tiers below which were established to interact with each other to provide the best service for the patient. See Webster, *The National Health Service: A political history* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1998); Webster, *The Health Services since the War.*

[52] Virginia Berridge, *Marketing Health,* p. 27. Linked to this, the Aberdeen typhoid outbreak of 1964 illustrated the important role the use of mass communication techniques could play within a localised environment under MoH administration. This approach would become increasingly influential in public relations terms. Lesley Diack and David F. Smith, 'The Media and the Management of a Food Crisis: Aberdeen's Typhoid Outbreak in 1964', in *Medicine, the Market and the Mass Media:*

adopted by certain local health authorities, focussed on another pioneering approach to postwar public health: 'evidence-based' health research.[53] Traditionally public health focused on epidemic diseases. But as patterns of disease and mortality changed, chronic diseases became central to public health.[54] These changes altered public health activity at both local and national level and ensured that the role of the individual within the 'risk society' only increased in public health importance.[55]

From this specific epidemiological link, a new style of public health emerged which put into sharp relief the previously understated role of individual behaviour in disease aetiology. Within this context, cardiovascular disease was reconfigured in relation to risk. Lifestyle factors, which had previously been applied to the aetiology of lung cancer, were correspondingly employed as an explanatory cause of heart disease too.[56] Jerry Morris, the first epidemiologist to analyse statistical data on coronary heart disease and activity, was particularly proactive in applying these new

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Producing Health in the Twentieth Century, ed. by Virginia Berridge and Kelly Loughlin (London and New York: Routledge 2005), pp. 79-94

[53] This was a legacy of social medicine. See: Porter, *Social Medicine and Medical Sociology*, pp. 97-119.

[54] This focus on epidemic diseases was weakened by the wartime development of antibiotics, large-scale vaccination programmes, and effective chemotherapy and mass radiography against TB.

[55] The smoking and lung cancer link was particularly important in public health terms due to its impact on subsequent health policy. The studies connecting tobacco smoking with lung cancer of the 1950s are widely regarded as marking the start of a new public health era through the development of epidemiology. See: Berridge, *Marketing Health*; Berridge, 'The Policy Response to the Smoking and Lung Cancer Connection in the 1950s and 1960s', *The Historical Journal* 49:4 (2006), pp. 1185-1209; Stephen Lock, Lois Reynolds and Tilli Tansey (eds), *Ashes to Ashes: The History of Smoking and Health* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1998). However, as Luc Berlivet has outlined, the epidemiological, and indeed historical, focus on the cancer side of this story tends to eclipse other, important contributions to the epidemiological field concentrated on the aetiology of other non-infectious diseases. For example, the Framingham Study of cardiovascular disease never attained the same level of publicity or sustained policy influence as the studies of the aetiology of lung cancer. See: Berlivet, ''Association or Causation?', p. 42. 'Risk society' is a phrase borrowed from Ulrich Beck's *World Risk Society* (Cambridge MA: Polity Press, 1999).

[56] For an analyses of government recommendations for reducing coronary heart disease risk see: Chapter Three and Mark W. Bufton, 'British Expert Advice on Diet and Heart Disease c. 1945-2000', in *Making Health Policy: Networks in Research and Policy after 1945*, ed. by Virginia Berridge (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2005), pp. 125-148; Mark W. Bufton and Virginia Berridge, 'Post-war nutrition science and policy making in Britain c. 1945-1994: the case of diet and heart disease', in *Food, Science, Policy and Regulation in the Twentieth Century: International and comparative perspectives,* ed. by David F. Smith and Jim Philips (London: Routledge, 2000), pp. 189-206.

modes of statistical analyses. His study of coronary thrombosis proved highly influential in connecting lifestyle, and specifically occupation, with heart health.

> [C]oronary thrombosis...with its origins apparently in high living standards...seems to be arising from what we regard as successes of the social system... It is becoming clear that in the modification of personal behaviour, of diet, smoking and physical exercise and the rest, which look like providing at any rate part of the answer, the responsibility of the individual for his own health will be far greater than formerly.[57]

In 1953, he demonstrated the differential susceptibility to heart disease of sedentary bus drivers and active conductors in an occupational study that clearly illustrated the centrality of lifestyle factors.[58] This focus on individual behavioural responsibility was slowly incorporated into more nuanced explanations of disease causation. The development of the social survey, itself an important element of statistical development during the 1950s, offered evidence for explanations of disease rooted in social structural inequalities.[59] Therefore, by linking lifestyle to disease Morris achieved an important scientific triumph for the long-term role of epidemiology in assessing disease risk statistically.

Through a general emphasis on the individual the roles of education and persuasion found a new social climate within print, radio and television advertising as the international proliferation of chronic diseases continued apace. As Virginia Berridge has suggested, the wartime and immediate postwar emphasis on civic responsibility and ideas of citizenship was replaced by a focus on propaganda and persuasion utilising consumerist practices.[60] Augmented by the Report of the Royal

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[57] Jerry Morris, 'Coronary Thrombosis: A Modern Epidemic', *The Listener*, 8 December 1955, pp. 995-996.

[58] J. N. Morris, J. A. Heady, P. A. B. Raffle, C. G. Roberts and J. W. Parks, 'Coronary Heart Disease and Physical Activity of Work' *The Lancet* (1953), pp. 1053-57 and pp. 1111-20. During the war, Morris, in conjunction with Richard Titmuss, had conducted a study of rheumatic heart disease.[58] Their investigation had emphasised the role of class and occupation as pre-determinants of disease. J. N. Morris and R. M. Titmuss, 'Epidemiology of Juvenile Rheumatism', *The Lancet* ii (1942), pp. 59-63. However, the work of Richard Doll and Austin Bradford Hill on smoking and lung cancer (1950) instigated a new approach to scientific research within the framework of epidemiology.

[59] Berridge, *Marketing Health*, p. 32.

[60] Berridge, *Marketing Health*, p. 53.

College of Physicians of 1962, which was based on recommendations addressing the scientific links between smoking and lung cancer, the focus on epidemiology during the 1960s and the growing concern over chronic disease mortality resulted in a wider public policy agenda. Central government linked medicine and consumerism at public health level through the focused emergence of the role of the individual. Utilising a new emphasis on individual persuasion, state health education and health policy moved in a distinctly consumerist direction.[61]

As part of this consumerist shift, advertising methods were subsumed into governmental information services and central agencies began utilising the commercial techniques of market research to assess the nature of public opinion. Vance Packard's *The Hidden Persuaders*, published in 1957 was influential within this reconfiguring of advertising in Britain through its promotion of sophisticated advertising techniques, many of which were imported from the US.[62] By adopting a more professional and academic approach to advertising, the Central Office of Information was beginning to consider the tension between information provision and the 'hard sell'. This notion of persuasion would become increasingly central to health advertising as the cigarette became framed as a key target within the anti-aesthetic health education movement initiated by the advertising agency Saatchi and Saatchi for the Health Education Council in the early 1970s.[63]

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[61] The first shift towards this new communication style was typified by the replacement of the overtly propagandist Ministry of Information with the new Central Office for Information in 1946. Considerably smaller than its wartime predecessor, the new body was established to coordinate publicity and information services for all governmental departments. However, it did not assume total and unequivocal responsibility for information policy across all departments. See: Tom Wildy, 'From MOI to the COI – Publicity and Propaganda in Britain, 1945-1951: the National Health insurance campaigns of 1948', *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television* 6:1 (1986), pp. 3-17; Sir Fife Clark, *The Central Office of Information* (London: Allen & Unwen, 1970), p. 92; Berridge, *Marketing Health*, pp. 195-6.

[62] Vance Packard, *The Hidden Persuaders* (London: Longman, 1957).

[63] These Saatchi and Saatchi campaigns for the HEC are discussed in more detail in Chapter Three. See: Alison Fendley, *Saatchi & Saatchi: The Inside Story* (New York: Arcade Publishing, 1995).

By the late 1950s and early 1960s the governmental wartime stance of relying on citizens to act responsibly if 'given the facts' was replaced by a stimulated commitment to actively engage with consumers about harmful goods and substances, and to persuade them about risk.[64] The issue of smoking and lung cancer was the first chronic condition to receive a media and consumerist focused approach in public health. Certainly the legitimation of this link over the following decade set in motion a new public health mandate focussed on individualism in disease prevention within the 'risk society'. Stemming from these developments, the government began to frame heart disease within behavioural and individual health indicators. Yet, the single-issue and 'common enemy' approach to disease causality certainly assisted in elevating the smoking and lung cancer link to national prominence during this period. Heart disease did not so easily fit these single modes of causality, nor did it have a similar international position in public health terms. Indeed, it was not until mortality rates from cardiovascular disease superseded all others that the government began to address it seriously in epidemiological terms.[65] Risk factors for disease became central to the understanding that diet might be a major determinant for lifestyle-centred health risk from the late 1950s, with exercise and fitness also making their way onto the emerging national health agenda. Indeed, their close epidemiological relationship with diet would gradually come to influence the advertising strategies of certain food manufacturers for margarine in particular. In this regard Unilever's Flora margarine brand became the first product to utilise the possible link between diet and heart disease as a sales tool.

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[64] The wartime and immediate postwar emphasis on citizenship and responsibility yielded to a commitment to propaganda and persuasion within a consumerist tradition. See: Berridge, 'Medicine and the Public', p. 288.

[65] Berridge, *Marketing Health*, p. 50.

Marketing Marge: Unilever and Visual Advertising

LATE HOME FROM SHOPPING–FOR A BLUE BAND SPREADING SURPRISE!

"YOU never know how long the shopping will take on a Friday afternoon," says Mrs. Barbara Manston. "And when I was late home to get tea ready, I thought it would take me ages to spread the bread – because everything was in my new fridge." Guess what actually happened? Spreading done in next to no time – because Blue Band doesn't harden up in your fridge!

"Of course – my family all think it tastes quite as good as some of the butter you get these days" said Mrs. Manston, when we asked her what she thought of that creamy Blue Band flavour. "And they love Blue Band sandwiches!"

Tried Blue Band yet? Ask your grocer (and see what a wonderful difference this tasty bread-spreader makes to your housekeeping).

BLUE BAND LUXURY MARGARINE

SPECIALLY MADE FOR THE BUTTER-DISH

Everyone's ready for tea! And with small children around, it's such a relief to be able to get it ready in next to no time, with easy-spreading Blue Band.

Look at the Blue Band pack! Four separately wrapped quarters in every pound of Blue Band.

JUST 2/6 A WHOLE POUND PACKET

Figure 6.2: 'Late Home from Shopping – For a Blue Band Spreading Surprise' (Unilever Archives, MD/AL 107/1 – B10309 – Margarine), c. 1957.

At a time when mass marketing was seeping into many aspects of political and consumer life, the food industry was emerging from wartime restrictions to re-establish itself at the centre of resurgent consumer cultures. This 'Late Home from Shopping' newspaper advertisement from the late 1950s visually emphasised the important position that goods were playing within contemporary postwar life. Even a cursory glance at the two photographic images reveals a small 'futuristic' car, an electric cooker and a refrigerator. They depicted a busy housewife and mother completing the gendered tasks of shopping, cooking and looking after her family. Set in the privet hedged landscape of British suburbia, the advert established Blue Band consumption as an important aspect of new modes of preparing, cooking and preserving food. The supporting text, from Mrs Barbara Manston['s]' perspective, further established this narrative purpose: 'And when I was late home to get tea ready, I thought it would take me ages to spread the bread – because everything was in my new fridge'. The advertisement then asserted that 'spreading [can be] done in no time – because Blue Band doesn't harden up in your fridge'. The primacy of the fridge in a number of Blue Band advertisements (see Figure 2.1) of this period revealed the value placed on domestic appliances by Unilever to sell products especially designed to take advantage of them. Within this context, the food industry capitalised not only on the rapid increase in domestic appliance purchases during the mid-to-late 1950s but also on the expansion of the supermarket, with its large refrigerated storage units, to launch new products with longer shelf lives as a consequence of better preservation methods.[66] Spreadable margarine from the fridge was one such development, which also challenged the dominance of butter by giving margarine specific qualities beyond butter. Unilever used targeted advertising that emphasised these benefits to establish market share for a product redefined as luxurious, a middle-class product aimed at new female owners of modern domestic appliances.[67]

Yet this focus on the refrigerator was not the only way that Unilever marketed margarine. They also constructed their margarine brands in relation to ease of use and

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[66] Sue Bowden and Avner Offer, 'Household Appliances and the Use of Time: The United States and Britain since the 1920s', *Economic History Review* 4 (1994), pp. 725-748.

[67] Unilever Archives, 'Unilever Report & Accounts 1973 – Supplement Edible Fats and Chilled Dairy Products', UNI /1974/1.

taste, while later identifying health as a further means of creating new attitudes towards margarine and new markets for Unilever's edible fats industry. By attaching margarine brands such as Blue Band and Stork to lifestyles, such products now contributed to a new consumer model that allowed citizen-consumers to be active participants in the re-marketisation of health in relation to food and nutrition. As so eloquently put by American economist George H. Hildebrand, 'Consumer sovereignty and the liberal system...stand or fall together'.[68] A great political aspiration of the immediate postwar era was raising the standard of living, particularly amongst the working and lower middle classes. Propagated in part by the Conservative government as an electioneering tool, as well as through the mass media, these higher standards of living contributed to the emergence of new attitudes to food and diet. Moreover, the spread of affluence changed ideas about acceptable standards of living. In particular, rising wages ensured that goods which had previously been viewed as luxuries were now affordable for the average citizen.[69] Consequently, it was possible to market goods, including food, to citizen-consumer, themselves intent on embracing the advantages of their recently acquired affluence. Within this context, Unilever was quick to take advantage of favourable economic conditions for foregrounding their own margarine brands within the myriad of new consumer products that were rapidly manufactured and marketed in postwar Britain.

With the lifting of state control of the food supply, consumers demonstrated unfettered demand for many of those goods that had suffered the most stringent cuts. In response, the edible fat trade underwent a rapid, if short-lived, consumer boom. However, sales quickly levelled off. Unilever feared market saturation and responded

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[68] George H. Hildebrand, as quoted in Victoria de Grazia, *Irresistible Empire: America's Advance through 20th Century Europe* (Cambridge, MA, 2005), p. 336.

[69] Dolly Smith Wilson, 'A New Look at the Affluent Worker: The Good Working Mother in Post-War Britain', *Twentieth Century British History* 17:2 (2006), pp. 206-229; Elizabeth Roberts, *Women and Families: An Oral History, 1940-1970* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995), p. 126.

quickly (and successfully) with a variety of new brands.[70] Prior to the Second World War, Unilever's edible fat trade represented one-fifth of the total United Kingdom butter and margarine market.[71] By the late 1950s, its market share for margarine in Britain was over two-thirds.[72] The case for Unilever, therefore, lies not in its typicality as a margarine producer in postwar Britain, but its atypicality. As one of Europe's major production companies, Unilever was uniquely placed to take advantage of the rapidly changing postwar retail environment. Within this context, brand development in conjunction with new technological advances in production became key to their long-term success.

Unilever's diversification during this period ensured that those brands that re-emerged in the 1950s and 1960s – Stork, Summer County, Blue Band and Echo – had qualities that had eluded pre-war technological possibilities.[73] They were heavily marketed for their superior flavour to butter, their spreadability, their texture and consistency, or in terms of luxury and comfort.[74] Because of this commitment to diversification (which later came to incorporate health and understandings of disease risk) Unilever was a key manufacturer in re-marketing and re-focusing margarine away from wartime shortages and towards new consumer needs such as spreadability.

Consequently, the development of these brands necessitated similarly innovative approaches to product design and advertising. While such advertisements did not reflect a social reality, they were important cultural artefacts that revealed anxieties and aspirations prevalent at the time. Thus, Unilever's margarine business raised issues concerning the circulation of ideas about food and the contemporary

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[70] Wilson, *Unilever, 1945-1965*, p. 161-163.
[71] Wilson, *Unilever, 1945-1965*, p. 162.
[72] Jones and Miskell, 'European Integration and Corporate Restructuring', p. 116.
[73] Stork had been launched initially during the 1920s but was disbanded during the war and re-launched in 1954. Of these four brands, Stork and Blue Band were the most successful in terms of revenue and both received committed advertising campaigns throughout the 1950s and 1960s.
[74] Wilson, *Unilever, 1945-1965*, p. 162.

domestic landscape in Britain. These were messages that linked consumer goods with a new (and deregulated) consumer society, free from wartime restrictions. By analysing the output of one multinational company, I will expose the visual and textual tropes within margarine advertisements of postwar Britain. The use of text-laden advertisements, the frequent use of photographs and the inclusion of first-person buyer testimonials reflected both the continuation of interwar advertising models and new modes of communication which were responsible for advancing wider notions of what the dominant culture viewed as appropriate individualised behaviour.[75] As with all postwar product formulation, brand development was closely aligned to a recognisable and memorable advertising focus. In this way, individual brands utilised different visual and aesthetic tropes to sell their products; such ideas of beauty, taste and judgement were key battlegrounds for securing brand loyalty during a period of consumer history where economic competition was ever increasing.[76] In the domain of food, and edible fats in particular, new production methods coalesced with emergent marketing techniques. Just as housewives were purchasing refrigerators as markers of a 'modern', postwar housewife, Unilever was responding with new product developments and brand launches for spreadable butter 'straight from the fridge'.[77]

At a time when collective aspirations were concentrated, at least publicly, on the attainment of individual (and by extension, familial) affluence, publicity in the realm of food often focussed on the localised benefits of unfettered economic prosperity that the postwar period seemed to be heralding. The use of advanced

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[75] Nixon, 'Apostles of Americanisation?', pp. 477-499.

[76] In this context, aesthetics is understood as the critical reading of images and culture to unpack the nature of the image, the construction of taste and the appreciation of culturally contingent notions of beauty.

[77] Unilever Archives, 'Unilever Report & Accounts 1973 – Supplement Edible Fats and Chilled Dairy Products', UNI /1974/1.

printing technology ensured that a visual argument could be conveyed with the assistance of striking typography that was exploited for its 'look', displaying schematic representations of information in harmony with the visual components. New techniques in broadcast media altered the ways in which audiences engaged with information and an audience was now seen to have a 'camera eye'.[78] Consequently, both private industry and governmental departments were keen to engage with this emphasis on the visual. Advertisements centred on, and conformed to advertisers' understandings of effective communication through active 'selling'.[79] The need to persuade individuals to adopt new habits, embrace new lifestyles and consumer behaviours were thus inextricably linked to the creation of new consumer markets for products such as margarine.

Mike Savage has argued that the contemporary emphasis on individuality was linked to people's concerns with being able to consider themselves as 'ordinary' individuals, rather than members of collective social classes.[80] As a consequence, new middle-class identities were created, which moved away from a focus on status and instead emphasised the technocratic and scientific expertise of the middle-classes as a whole.[81] In similar ways middle-class identification was being re-orientated within the realm of consumerism. The food industry, as a result of its increasing product diversification and economies of scale, was able to identify and brand particular products, lifestyles and class ideals to particular cohorts of people.

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[78] James Shand, 'The Alphabet and the Printing Press', *Typography* 1 (1936), as quoted in Jim Aulich, 'Stealing the Thunder: The Soviet Union and Graphic Propaganda on the Home Front during the Second World War', *Visual Culture in Britain* 13:3 (2012), p. 356.

[79] Aulich, 'Stealing the Thunder', p. 356.

[80] Savage, 'Affluence and Social Change', p. 458.

[81] Savage, 'Affluence and Social Change', p. 458; David Edgerton, 'The White Heat Revisited: The British Government and Technology in the 1960s', *Twentieth Century British History* 7:1 (1996), pp. 53-82.

Within this context, Blue Band was visually aligned with the affluent middle-class of postwar Britain. Traditional in their aesthetic, these advertisements often included new domestic technologies to evoke the 'modern'. This variety of Blue Band advertising material exploited both the contemporary focus on the class dimensions of the affluent society and the gendering of this process. As analysis will demonstrate, the Blue Band advertisements of the 1950s can be easily organised into two distinct groups. The first focused on the visual duality formed between husband and wife, while the second widened this visual rhetoric to include the nuclear family scene. Both of these representations relied on traditional and rigid views of gendered societal positions. Indeed, almost all Unilever margarine advertisements from this period depended on conventional gender roles to promote its products. Echoing wartime publicity that constructed female war work as 'just for the duration' (as shown in Chapter One), these advertisements emphasised the important maternal and familial role assigned to women, re-establishing the postwar positioning of women within the home as normative feminine behaviour.

Within this sustained tradition for marketing food products, Blue Band advertisements visually reinforced the status of the housewife and homemaker. As Figure 2.3 established, gender and femininity played important roles in postwar advertisements. This advertisement, in particular, portrayed a husband and wife enjoying breakfast at a carefully laid table, holding an opened newspaper emblazoned with the headline, 'Breakfast with Blue Band'.

BREAKFAST WITH BLUE BAND LUXURY MARGARINE

it's got that top of the morning flavour

Blue Band tastes so delicious. So creamily fresh, so creamily rich – that's how Blue Band tastes. And no wonder. Blue Band's got that rich, fresh, *top of the morning* flavour.

Blue Band spreads so easily. Always. Blue Band always stays 'just right' for perfect spreading wherever you keep it – hot kitchen, ice-cold fridge.

Blue Band is packed so brilliantly. Golden *foil-wrapped*. In pound packets. And in every packet – 4 separate *foil-wrapped* quarters. Each – *specially made for the butter-dish.*

IT'S SPECIALLY MADE
FOR THE BUTTER-DISH!

Always
spreads
so easily

VBB-12-10482

Figure 2.7: 'Breakfast with Blue Band' advertisement, (The Advertising Archives, 30550086), c. 1955.

Dressed in pretty florals, not dissimilar to the floral drapes which framed the image, the wife in this scene was subsumed into the domestic environment, naturalising her role. The product was not centre stage in this advertisement. The inclusion of the margarine in a butter dish in the foreground did not claim attention. It blended in with the other pale breakfast foods on the table, finding a place in this morning ritual. This idea of ritual was reinforced by the open broadsheet newspaper, (also promoted in the wartime Eat Greens Daily [Figure 1.5]) which itself did more to visually link the scene with Blue Band than the foregrounded dish of margarine on the table. Rather to 'Breakfast with Blue Band' was to appropriate a stylised and idealised morning routine that coded home life as happy, leisurely and orchestrated by a committed and fulfilled wife. In this way, the advertisement was attempting to sell a particular expression of a middle-class lifestyle that was constructed to be luxurious, domestic and homely and emphasised by the use of crisp white, blues and reds in both personal dress and domestic interior. It combined an aesthetic framework that emphasised bright, almost Technicolor tones as an antidote to the austerity of the war, typified by the depiction of voluminous fabric in the clothing and curtains, after years of clothing and textile shortages.[82] By doing so, the advertisement almost visually suggested the rising tide of affluence in 1950s Britain, capitalising on associated product desires within consumer culture. In this respect, this advertisement can be understood to sell both products and lifestyles, centred on contemporary understandings of aspiration and ambition.

Blue Band equated marriage and mealtimes as visual partners in the mission to sell 'luxury' margarine alongside idealised lifestyles. To 'Breakfast with Blue Band' implicitly coded marital quality time with the breakfast table and the implicit class values associated with upward mobility. Furthermore, the underlining of certain 'key' words was used to add emphasis and to create visual coherency. The phrase, 'It's got that top of the morning flavour', created a textual and visual linkage between the central figures and the individual characteristics of the branded margarine itself. Its wording insinuated that in terms of taste it rivalled butter with that 'top of the morning flavour' an implicit reference to dairy farming and morning milking, themselves more closely related to butter manufacture than margarine production.

The accompanying text box, complete with a photograph of the margarine packaging, outlined the three major advantages of Blue Band margarine. In particular,

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[82] Zweiniger-Bargielowska, *Austerity in Britain*, pp. 87-98.

the advertisement emphasised flavour and spreadability as important distinctive features of the brand. It asserted that '**Blue Band tastes so delicious**. So creamily fresh, so creamily rich – that's how Blue Band tastes. And no wonder. Blue Band's got that rich, fresh, *top of the morning* flavour'. The repetition of '*top of the morning* flavour', this time italicised rather than underlined, suggested that the referencing of traditional associations between butter and agricultural production was an important rhetorical tool for marketing Blue Band. This phraseology also implicitly evoked connotations with other dairy produce, particularly the cream that sat on top of milk bottles during this period. Certainly, the explanatory text in this advertisement, repeated across all Blue Band output for the 'Breakfast with Blue Band' campaign, raised interesting, if not necessarily obvious questions about food in postwar Britain and the rhetorical importance of freshness.

Susanne Freidberg has argued that the appeal of the word 'fresh' in relation to food products lies in social anxieties about the culture of mass consumption.[83] She furthered that this modern consumerism propagates convenience, shelf life, indulgence and discipline. Yet at the same time these traits failed to foster authenticity and healthfulness.[84] As a result the rhetoric of freshness best satisfied modern appetites, obscuring the range of technologies that protects food against spoilage and maintains its health-giving, nutritive properties. Numerous other historians have explored health and nutrition in relation to food adulteration during the early twentieth century that exposed an underlying governmental and social concern regarding freshness.[85] In particular, beer, bread and fresh milk were often

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[83] Susanne Freidberg, *Fresh: A Perishable History* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), p. 3.

[84] Freidberg, *Fresh*, p. 3.

[85] In particular, historians have focussed on food adulteration in the early part of the century. For example see: Michael French and Jim Philips, *Cheated not poisoned?: Food Regulation in the United Kingdom, 1875-1938* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000); Anne Hardy, 'Food, Hygiene

contaminated with bacteria and responsible for spreading a variety of diseases including scarlet fever and tuberculosis. Improvements followed the introduction of pasteurization and sterilisation during the bottling process but it was governmental regulation during the 1930s that changed the public image of milk to that of a clean and healthy food.[86] Similarly, anti-poverty campaigners did much to champion clean milk as a 'perfect' food, especially for children.[87] In social discourse, 'clean milk' replaced bread as a key product that benefitted health and well-being.[88] Certainly, in the first decades of the twentieth century, milk was promoted as an ideal food for overcoming widespread childhood deficiency in protein and fat.[89] It was constructed as an essential food, necessary for optimal growth and development and therefore closely linked to the perfection of the body.[90] Milk education, instituted by anti-poverty groups and by the interwar growth of milk clubs and milk weeks, emphasised the benefits of milk as an essential component of the diet.[91] Consumer images of milk, which had once evoked scenes of an agricultural nature, representing production, were instead replaced by images of a healthy consumer. This shift in attention from

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and the Laboratory: A Short History of Food Poisoning in Britain, circa 1850-1950', *Social History of Medicine* 12:2 (1999), pp. 293-311; John Burnett, *Liquid Pleasures: A Social History of Drinks in Modern Britain* (London: Routledge, 1999); Peter Atkins, 'The Pasteurization of England: The Science, Culture and Health Implications of Milk Processing, 1900-1950', in *Food, Science, Policy and Regulation in the Twentieth Century: International and Comparative Perspectives* (London: Routledge, 2000), pp. 37-51, Peter Atkins, 'White Poison: The Social Consequences of Milk Consumption, 1850-1930', *Social History of Medicine* 5: 2 (1992), pp. 207-227.

[86] Atkins, 'White Poison', p. 224.

[87] Frank Trentmann, 'Bread, Milk and Democracy', in *The Politics of Consumption: Material Culture and Citizenship in Europe and America*, ed. by Martin Daunton and Matthew Hilton (Oxford: Berg, 2001), pp. 142-148. For the early history see: Waddington, *The Bovine Scourge*, pp. 153-174.

[88] Trentmann, 'Bread, Milk and Democracy', pp. 135-138.

[89] Peter J. Atkins, 'Fattening children or fattening farmers? School Milk in Britain, 1921-1941', *Economic History Review* LVIII: 1 (2005), p. 61. See also: Peter J. Atkins, *Liquid Materialities: A History of Milk, Science and the Law* (Farnham and Burlington VA: Ashgate, 2010), pp. 225-276.

[90] This linking with the perfection of the body has been historicized within an American context but parallel developments can be seen in Britain especially in Figure 1.1 where the milk bottle itself forms part of this perfectly developed body. See: Erna Melanie DuPuis, *Nature's Perfect Food: How Milk Became America's Drink* (New York and London: New York University Press, 2001), p. 17; also Chapter One.

[91] Trentmann, 'Bread, Milk and Democracy', pp. 135-138.

the site of production to the agent of consumption linked the product more closely with health and bodily development.

In this period, advertisements for milk in particular used the rhetoric of pure and natural to sell products to concerned consumers, emphasising the benefits of freshness to wellbeing. Yet food adulteration had been largely eradicated through food safety legislation by the onset of the Second World War. The textual repetition of freshness and naturalness in Blue Band advertisements exposed the resilience of freshness as symbolic of food safety and purity. Its re-emergence in the 1950s was noteworthy, particularly due to the widespread reliance on canned, preserved and dried foods during the war to augment rations. This marketing of freshness during the 1950s reflected a very conscious departure from austerity within consumer culture. Instead, it associated freshness with the rise of modes of selling refrigerated freshness, still closely related to health, nutrient preservation and convenience.[92]

Within the second group of Blue Band advertisements produced during the mid-1950s, the nuclear family grouping formed the central visual element. As displayed in Figure 2.4, a family enjoyed breakfast around the kitchen table. The advertisement portrayed a wife and three children, with all but one child functioning to direct the viewer's (implicitly the adult target audience) attention towards the wage-earner. This manipulation of the 'gaze' within the image itself revealed contemporary understandings of familial responsibility – the wife was the food purchaser, the individual responsible for her children and her husband's happiness and well-being. This scene was not engaged in selling margarine alone. Blue Band was portrayed as the lubricating agent – facilitating this happy marriage – and a bonding agent – unifying the family. Thus, again within the remits of traditional

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[92] Freidberg, *Fresh*, pp. 18-48.

representations of marital and familial life, Blue Band margarine was depicted as a unifying foodstuff capable of creating and maintaining contemporary notions of familial bliss.

Breakfast with Blue Band

Breakfast-in-the-new-house and Blue Band, now there's one family who've made two very good moves! Have *you* breakfasted with Blue Band yet? Or are you still putting up with second best, first thing?

It comes to you tasting creamy and fresh as the morning milk!

BLUE BAND tastes just wonderful! Better than anything you've ever had before! So coaxingly creamy. So invitingly fresh. It tastes as creamy and fresh as the morning milk. Yes, Blue Band is a real *luxury* spread – specially made for the butter-dish.

And this delicate, creamy flavour is preserved at the very peak of lush freshness by Blue Band's unique *golden foil-wrapped packet.*

1 lb. of Blue Band in every packet – in four separate *foil-wrapped* quarters – each richly ready for your butter-dish.

With the easiest spreading ever!

Blue Band always spreads *smoothly and easily* – even on the coldest day, straight on to the crumbliest new bread.

Blue Band

LUXURY MARGARINE

Specially made for the butter-dish

Figure 2.8: 'Breakfast with Blue Band' advertisement, (The Advertising Archives, 30548732), c. 1955.

Within the visual portrayal of this idealised 'happy family', brought together by Blue Band, the advertisement depicted a variety of new, technologically sophisticated appliances, in particular the electric cooker and boiler. Notably, this advertisement avoided either visually or textually referencing the refrigerator. Instead it linked Blue Band to the new homeowner in British society emphasising that

‘Breakfast-in-the-new-house and Blue Band, now there’s one family who’s made two good moves’. The postwar housing programme, necessitated in part by the destruction or inadequacy of many homes during the 1940s and early 1950s ensured that many people were rehoused or moved to new homes in the decades following the war.[93] This Blue Band advertisement explicitly targeted those who occupied new ‘modern’ homes, complete with central heating and electric cookers. It aligned Blue Band with these same ‘modern’ appliances insisting that ‘Blue Band always spreads smoothly and easily – even on the coldest day, straight on to the crumbliest new bread’. Therefore, the main image produced another visual argument about the role of technology in the domestic environment.

By including these domestic appliances, as normalised everyday components of the typical kitchen, Unilever was marketing its margarine brand as a similarly new and technologically sophisticated product ready for assimilation into the average domestic setting. The place of Blue Band was with these other domestic devices in that it replicated and improved upon nature and ‘comes to you tasting creamy and fresh as morning milk’. This tagline implicitly referred to its butter-like characteristics, utilising pre-established familiarity with the qualities of butter in proactive efforts at convincing a new consumer base to make the change from butter to margarine and specifically Blue Band. As with Figure 2.3, the text linked the brand with themes of freshness, purity and naturalness, aligning the product with butter and its natural creamy freshness. The use of the phrase ‘It comes to you’ further connected this butter substitute with the agricultural process of milking and transporting fresh produce for sale, in addition to the health claims that milk was a ‘perfect’ food. Furthermore, it emphasised that ‘this delicate, creamy flavour is preserved at the very

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[93] See: Nicholas Bullock, *Building the Post-War World: Modern architecture and reconstruction in Britain* (London: Routledge, 2002) and Mark Clapson and Peter Larkham, *The Blitz and its legacy: wartime destruction and postwar reconstruction* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013).

peak of lush freshness by Blue Band's unique *golden foil-wrapped packet*', linking freshness with the luxury ('lush') of the golden wrapper.

The postwar pursuit for convenience allowed Unilever's margarine and edible fat trade to respond with improved branded products. These brands centred their 'unique selling point' on those very same claims of convenience and often visually expressed them in relation to constructed ideologies of taste. The packaging of the product, itself given visual prominence, emphasised the utility and benefits of individual margarine portions. By visually reproducing the role Blue Band could play in the domestic setting of every British home, this advertisement (Figure 2.4) allowed the textual component to provide both supplementary information and persuade the viewer of the merits of Blue Band.

These Blue Band advertisements in their own way contributed to the construction of women as feminine, domestic, and the responsible agents for shopping, cooking and looking after their families. The images produced understandings of normative female behaviour as caring and motherly, while situated always within the confines of the home. By portraying idealised representations of women in postwar Britain, they restored the middle-class feminine ideal of the stay at home, full-time mother and housewife. While the postwar period was a time when much about women's societal position was undergoing unprecedented change, this affected different classes in different ways. Individual experience such as class, age, race, marital status, geographical and social mobility all influenced women's experience of domestic life.[94] While many working-class women were forced by poverty and poor social conditions to work long before the postwar period, changing demographics altered the ability of married women to participate in the labour force.

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[94] Katherine Holden, 'Family, Caring and Unpaid Work', in *Women in Twentieth Century Britain*, ed. by Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska (London: Pearson Education, 1999), p. 138.

Early marriage, smaller families, greater knowledge about birth control and longer life expectancy meant that women's lives were no longer dominated by continuous childbearing and rearing.[95] As Penny Summerfield has suggested, the postwar removal of the marriage bar in occupations such as the civil service and the teaching profession led to the emergence of a 'dual-role discourse'.[96] While women were increasingly entering the workforce throughout the 1950s and 1960s, the majority were still vacating posts when they had children and as such Unilever's focus on the domestic wife and mother reflected an enduring social reality.

As Carol Dyhouse argued, 'Labour politics and the emergence of social welfare in early twentieth century Britain certainly served to institutionalize a conservative vision of family life'.[97] As these Blue Band advertisements revealed, the individualised, representative (if romanticised) mother and wife were the managers of the household and as such held vital purchasing power within the realm of food and home. These images operated as part of a process that feminised food purchasing and cooking, domesticating and gendering food purchases in ways analogous to the feminisation of the refrigerator.[98] Although profoundly shaped by class, ethnicity, race, location and age, these advertisements homogenised femininity through idealising the nuclear family unit or the happily married couple. By doing so, they functioned not merely as passive promotional materials but as active agents endowed with gender-coded messages instructing women on how to behave like gendered beings. As part of this, new technologies reconfigured kitchens with the refrigerator in

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[95] Angela Davis, 'Oral History and the Creation of Collective Memories: Women's Experiences of Motherhood in Oxfordshire c. 1945-1970', *University of Sussex Journal of Contemporary History* 10 (2006), p. 1.

[96] Penny Summerfield, *Reconstructing Women's Wartime Lives: Discourse and Subjectivity in Oral Histories of the Second World War* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998), pp. 205-206.

[97] Carol Dyhouse, *Feminism and the Family in England, 1880-1939* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989), p. 9.

[98] Watkins, 'Beauty Queen, Bulletin Board and Browser', p. 143.

particular eliminating the need for daily grocery shopping in favour of a once weekly supermarket trip. It became domesticated into daily practice, shifting from novel and luxurious to essential and normal. As one Mass Observer recorded, 'like the washing machine and the dryer, the refrigerator is the latest in a succession of similar machines. All are necessary to family life as far as we are concerned'.[99] By normalising expectations about typical living in postwar Britain, such technologies (and indeed their contents) became constitutive of domesticity.[100]

Blue Band was not alone in being framed by Unilever as modern, domestic and feminine.[101] Other margarine brands were similarly advertised to wives and mothers as convenient substitutes for butter, emphasising their value added characteristics when compared with butter. In this vein, Stork margarine also established new and important domestic markets in the immediate postwar period. Introduced as a branded margarine product in Britain in 1920, Unilever launched the 'Stork Cookery Service' in 1939 to provide advice to housewives in the use of margarine products as a comparable butter substitute. Its introduction was carefully timed to coincide with the announcement of food rationing to ensure that their Service received public prominence in the local, regional and national press. In 1940, the margarine industry engaged in a collective and voluntary de-branding and consequently came under the control of a single organisation: Marcome Ltd (which was connected to the wartime Ministry of Food).[102] Despite its effective withdrawal from sale during the period of food rationing, Stork managed to maintain an important

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[99] Mass Observation Archives, University of Sussex, Survey Participant B1654, male, response to question 6 of the Directive on New Technology, 1991.

[100] Watkins, 'Beauty Queen, Bulletin Board and Browser', p. 145.

[101] Summer County and Echo were also marketed throughout the 1950s in terms of domesticity and family life. See: Jones, *Transforming Unilever*, pp. 121-133.

[102] Joseph D. Burridge, 'The dilemma of frugality and consumption in British women's magazines 1940-1955', *Social Semiotics* 18:3 (2008), pp. 397.

educative role within the wartime food system.[103] The Service printed and disseminated a variety of leaflets and cooking manuals informing women on how to make use of their rations and inventive ways to overcome certain shortages while they also organised cookery demonstrations around the country.[104] In doing so, Unilever used the Stork symbol to market the brand as a public service during the war. Following the loss of its label identity, this cookery service was an important replacement for maintaining brand prominence.[105] The creation of this 'substitute service' category was a new and innovative way of overcoming the associated diminution of brand loyalty that a controlled food system initiated. Therefore, with the lifting of butter and margarine rationing in 1954 Stork was able to re-enter the competitive food market with its brand identity still largely intact. This identity was largely centred on the easily recognised central icon: the stork itself.

With the re-launch of Stork margarine in 1954, Unilever capitalised on the brand identity it had worked hard to maintain during the war. It ran a number of black and white newspaper advertisements centred on the slogans 'Soon you'll have Stork' and 'Today you can get Stork' (See Figure 2.5), which emphasised the importance of 'Forget[ting] those dreary yesterdays …'. They re-utilised their pre-war advertising icon, the Stork bird, which as outlined in Chapter One, had important familial and mothering connotations within wartime propaganda. In this respect, Unilever's very choice of the stork as the brand emblem, visually and symbolically connected Stork margarine with wider issues of a balanced diet, nutrition and health. Yet, the central emphasis of these initial advertisements was to engage both with the pre-war Stork purchaser and the new margarine consumer who needed to be convinced that postwar

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[103] Paul Clark, 'The Marketing of Margarine', *European Journal of Marketing* 20:5 (1986), pp. 52-65.
[104] Clark, 'The Marketing of Margarine', p. 57.
[105] Burridge, 'The dilemma of frugality and consumption', p. 397.

margarine was not your wartime fare but rather tasted good, after all ‘If you think you’ve tasted Stork before – you haven’t!’.

If you think you've tasted Stork before—you haven't!

Not like this! There's never been *anything* quite like this before—not even the Stork Margarine you may once have enjoyed! One taste on bread or toast, and you'll be left wondering how it gets such a creamy flavour—the flavour of fresh country produce!

You won't need to be told how good Stork is—a taste like that *could* only come from the rich goodness of natural ingredients. It's the cream of natural fats . . . sunshine in vitamin form . . . and milk—churned into a smooth, delicious blend of golden goodness.

One taste, and you'll know the days of 'Sorry it's only marge' are over. For *your* family, nothing else is good enough—nothing but fresh creamy Stork! Spread it nice and thick—but give them a chance to enjoy it in your cooking, too. Either way, Stork Margarine, is part of good living.

Figure 2.9: ‘Today you can get Stork’ advertisement (The Advertising Archive 30550245), c. 1954.

Following this initial advertising focus, Unilever’s Stork margarine publicity employed stylised, black and white images for their newspaper advertisements.[106] In particular, their ‘Stork: creamier taste – easier to cream’ campaign (Figures 2.6 and 2.7) from 1958 used stark black and white photographic imagery, heavily touched-up and shaded, to visually connect postwar domestic lifestyles with margarine

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[106] These re-launch campaigns were published in a variety of daily newspapers in early 1954.

consumption in interesting and novel ways. These advertisements focussed on the similarities between Stork and butter while simultaneously stressing the superiority of the former in terms of quick creaming and easy spreading but with equivalent flavour. In methods comparable to the Blue Band advertisements of the same period, Stork utilised pre-conceived perceptions of contemporaneous gender roles and family structures in concerted efforts at selling margarine. Unilever refrained from providing what could be termed idealistic representations of familial life with conventional class structures.

D.M. Reporter. jeering bunch of girls. Artillerymen in riot gear, six not the girls. indoors—but the Cyprus debate at the United Nations.

I can't tell Stork from butter

I don't eat a lot, but I'm pretty fussy about my food.
Stork on toast... now that's something I really like.
For my money it tastes *just* like butter.

I can...

it's easier to cream!

And if Jim had to do the cooking, he'd spot the difference straight away. I make a lot of cakes and, believe me, Stork is so much easier to rub in and cream—it takes the *effort* out of cooking.

STORK creamier taste–easier to cream!

TABLE MARGARINE 10d. PER HALF POUND

Figure 2.10: 'Stork creamier taste – easier to cream!' (Daily Mail), 25 November 1958.

Instead, the advertisements presented a minimalist, black and white depiction of the prospective domestic purchaser of Stork margarine. These newspaper advertisements were bold in their expressive pictorial qualities, resonant of the Russian constructivist and social realist style popularised by the European émigré community which dominated the visual style of many social and health messages produced during the war through their work with various British governmental departments.[107]

While it remains difficult to ascertain why Unilever made these particular aesthetic choices (especially as any record of this decision-making no longer exists), the more pared back use of text and the exclusion of the idealised, domestic home so relied upon in the contemporaneous Blue Band advertisements, suggests that a class-dynamic may be at work. The man's reference to money – 'For my money it tastes just like butter' – and the women's to effort – 'it takes the effort out of cooking' – implied that both cost and effort were concerns for the intended Stork purchaser (see Figure2.6). As Alysa Levene argued, 'ordinary' margarine (without a specific added value claim such as spreadability straight from the fridge) was an important, but often overlooked, symbol of domestic material culture and an obvious marker of socio-economic status.[108] It was understood as inferior to butter (initially in terms taste and nutrition, but both of these had been overcome by the postwar period due to changes in the manufacturing process and the introduction of fortification legislation) and its role as a subtle marker of status especially for women as purchasers, but also for men as consumers, ensured that at least for the first half of the twentieth century margarine remained a product tied up with understandings of class, and particularly the working

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[107] For more on European émigré graphic designers working in Britain during the 1940s and 1950s see: Cheryl Buckley and Tobias Hochscherf, 'Introduction: From German 'Invasion' to Transnationalism: Continental European Émigrés and Visual Culture in Britain, 1933-56', *Visual Culture in Britain* 13:2 (2012), pp. 157-168; Aulich, Stealing the Thunder', pp. 343-366; Robin Kinross, 'Émigré Graphic Designers in Britain: Around the Second World War and Afterwards', *Journal of Design History* 3:1 (1990), pp. 35-57. For more on the role in food publicity see Chapter One.

[108] Alysa Levene, 'The Meanings of Margarine in England: Class, Consumption and Material Culture from 1918-1953', *Contemporary British History* 28:2 (2014), pp. 145-165. Levene's work is centred on the period from the end of the First World War until the end of rationing and as such does not engage with postwar efforts to reinvigorate margarine sales and market it as a brand with significant advantages over butter.

classes.[109]

The omission of any reference, either visual or textual, to the refrigerator (or any domestic appliance) further insinuated that Stork was intended to appeal to working class women purchasers, themselves managing a limited housekeeping budget, and slower to benefit from the economic security brought about by affluence.[110] While more married working class mothers worked during the 1950s and 1960s than the prewar period, there was a historically specific value attached to the promotion of traditional gender roles within the working classes.[111] At a time when such roles were beginning to have less resonance in lived experience, nostalgia for more fixed stereotypes such as the idealisation of the working class mother or the committed domestic wife became more powerful.[112] In part stemming from a nostalgia for a period when working class identity was centred on established gender roles, these Stork advertisements reflected a gendered understanding of society, visually removed from middle-class reflections of affluence as with Blue Band. Instead they promoted an understanding of gender difference very much grounded in separate spheres – the women, as homemaker, at a table, creaming Stork and sugar by hand, and a man, as consumer eating Stork spread bread.

More so than their Blue Band contemporaries, Stork advertisements engaged with a pre-existing visual vocabulary, established within graphic art, which combined disparate and photomechanical imagery in a dynamic and dialectical relationship with

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[109] Levene, 'The Meanings of Margarine', p. 146.

[110] Wilson Smith 'A New Look at the Affluent Worker', p. 217. Wilson Smith has examined working women in relation to affluence in postwar Britain, emphasising that working class women in particular felt they had to work 'for the family', responding to the emergence of a more consumer-orientated society by working in order to help their families acquire the 'accouterments of affluence'. Wilson Smith, 'A New Look at the Affluent Worker', pp. 221-228.

[111] Stephen Brooke, 'Gender and Working Class Identity in Britain during the 1950s', *Journal of Social History* 34:4 (2001), p. 775.

[112] Brooke, 'Gender and Working Class Identity', p. 775; Chris Waters, 'Representations of Everyday Life: L.S. Lowry and the Landscape of Memory in Postwar Britain', *Representations* 65 (1999) pp. 121-150.

the accompanying text. To this end, the individual images were positioned at different points on the visual plain with text used to link these images across the advertisement. This advertisement (Figure 2.6) was loosely divided into two sections focussed on either the similarity between Stork and butter in terms of taste or the superiority of Stork in terms of creaming. One image in the top right of the advertisement depicted a man sitting at an easel eating a triangle of bread spread with Stork with his torso turned to direct the viewer's eye downwards towards the second main image with a young woman at a table creaming butter and sugar in a baking bowl in the left hand side of the image. This meaning was conveyed both through the visual images and the supporting text that operated as a dialogue between the two characters, and indeed the two images. This juxtaposition of image, text, image, text operated to create a narrative structure within the constraints of black and white newspaper advertising culture. Furthermore, the influence of photomontage can be seen from the ways the images themselves were arranged on the page; flattened pictures figuratively placed against a white background. By dividing the advertisement into these two separate, although textually linked sections, the advertisement again promoted a distinct gendered interpretation of food buying. The textual elements supported the understanding that when considering a butter substitute men were more interested in flavour, taste and the act of eating (along with cost), whereas women were focussed on its creaming ability, its convenience for cooking and for allowing them to engage in gender normative tasks of baking, preparing food and feeding their families.

Certainly, from the outset, Stork margarine was portrayed as a product closely allied to home baking. The central premise of their advertisements from this time period was the comparability between Stork and butter almost solely in terms of its value for creaming. The technological developments in margarine production, which came to fruition in the immediate postwar years, enabled Unilever to manufacture margarine brands with characteristics not only similar to natural butter products, but also, and by their own assertion, in some cases superior (in this case in terms of creaming effectiveness). As with Blue Band, product development based on the utilisation of vegetable oils formulated new types of margarine that spread more easily, even when used directly from the refrigerator (it was this focus on vegetable oils that later led to the inclusion of polyunsaturates in margarine production).[113] This production improvement facilitated its application within the domain of home baking. Therefore, Figure 2.7, in similar ways to Figure 2.6, likewise employed a very specific visual aesthetic for promoting margarine. Appropriating a similar visual structure to Figure 2.6, this advertisement depicted a man sitting in a high backed armchair by a small side table, in the top left hand corner presumably in the living room, again eating a triangle of bread spread with Stork. His wife was portrayed on the bottom right sitting on a metal framed kitchen chair, creaming the ingredients for a cake.

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[113] Wilson, *Unilever, 1945-1965*, pp. 71-72.

off long enough for him to clamber up a rope.

she could not taste at all. The case goes on today.

I can't tell Stork from butter

Felt rather flabbergasted when I found out! Rather fancied myself as a bit of an expert! But, after due consideration, I really must admit that Stork's creamy taste is truly remarkable.

I can . . . it's easier to cream!

So why waste valuable woman-hours slaving over a mixing bowl? Cooking's so much easier with Stork — it creams like a dream, rubs in like lightning and makes everything I cook taste terrific.

STORK
TABLE MARGARINE

creamier taste—

easier to cream!

STORK TABLE MARGARINE 10d PER HALF POUND

Figure 2.11: 'Stork creamier taste – easier to cream!' (Daily Mail), 29 October 1958.

The text dialogue once more linked the images, themselves divorced from any wider domestic context but in this case, a stark black line breaks up the harmony, as if to visually insinuate that these two images are displaying scenes separate from one another – one representing comfort and the other functionality. The different chairs they sit on further reinforced this. The use of the text in conjunction with the couple's joined eye line constructed the understanding that while men and women have different needs and expectations from food products that might seem divergent, Stork was marketed as a brand which accounted for dual gendered functions.

Again, highly indebted to the wartime and postwar influence of photomontage within British graphic design culture, this advertisement exploited formulaic interpretations of gender roles within the home and gender specific domestic responsibilities in a form very much grounded in contemporaneous advertising styles.[114] Postwar consumer culture contributed to the further dominance of the visual with advertising images key to both the meaning and desirability of commodities.[115] This visual lineage persisted within the postwar publicity ethos of both governmental departments and the advertising departments of private companies. Therefore there was a marked visual coherency within publicity images across political and non-political campaigns during the 1950s.

Whilst operating within very distinct and conventionalised visual boundaries regarding content, many postwar advertisements greatly benefitted from the visual 'renaissance' of the immediate postwar years. The development of British graphic design during the interwar period as a distinct visual field stimulated an increased incorporation of graphic techniques into postwar publicity methods more generally. Stork advertisements, for instance, attempted to incorporate influences from photogravure, a photomechanical process that reproduces the continuous tones of a photograph.[116] The arrangement recreated the clarity and focus of black and white photography whilst carefully interweaving the visual argument with the textual components. In doing so, the central figures interacted with their associated verbal dialogue in mutually supportive ways. Rather than directly addressing the viewer, these central characters engaged with each other, away from the direct vantage point of the viewer. A sense of intimacy was created in the scene itself, implying a personal endorsement of the product at remove from the subjective judgement of the

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[114] In particular, Sean Nixon has examined advertising culture in Britain in relation to gender – specifically masculinity. See: Sean Nixon, *Advertising Cultures: Gender, Commerce, Creativity* (London: Sage, 2003).

[115] This expands upon Thomas Richards' work on Victorian consumer culture with his assertion that 'spectacle and capitalism became indivisible' especially in relation to the use of the visual within consumer culture to sell products. See: *The Commodity Culture of Victorian England: Advertising and Spectacle, 1851–1914* (London: Verso, 1991), p. 16.

[116] Aulich, 'Stealing the Thunder', p.348.

manufacturer. This promotion method was based on ‘buyer testimonials’, an approach which emerged in the late nineteenth century but gained general usage in the late 1920s and early 1930s.[117] Such testimonials were implicitly coded within these Stork advertisements while revealing the marketing methods at work within margarine advertising.

Increasingly, however, in the postwar period asserting the merits of a product alone was not sufficient to ensure increased sales and long-term consumer loyalty. Instead, manufacturers adopted new approaches that engaged with the consumer at the level of an equal or peer. By projecting the image and ‘voice’ of the would-be consumer, these advertisements collectively endeavoured to persuade their consumer base of the intrinsic worth of Stork within their own gendered context. By reflecting individual, idiosyncratic (positive) responses to their products, Unilever appealed to the individual at the heart of postwar consumer culture. This mirrored and shaped more general approaches to promotion techniques during this period. As we have seen with reference to wartime governmental initiatives in the realm of food and health education, and as we shall see in relation to later campaigns during the 1970s and 1980s, this appeal to the individual provided a logic and rational argument for much visual publicity. In such a social milieu, gender remained an easily adoptable and highly successful visual trope for increasing food sales. Advertising material more generally conformed to and reinforced representations of gender roles in order to both engage with their consumer base and to tempt that base through a description of an achievable lifestyle.[118]

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[117] Andrew Ward, ‘Economic Change in the UK Food Manufacturing Industry, 1919-1939’ (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Reading, 1990), pp. 296 and 309.

[118] See: Nixon, *Advertising Cultures*, pp. 93-159; Stefan Schwarzkopf, ‘They do it with Mirrors: Advertising and British Cold War Consumer Politics’, *Contemporary British History* 19:2 (2005), pp. 133-150.

In many respects, Unilever formulated a very particular visual expression for the discussion of food products, and their associated advertising. This visual rhetoric, was centred on gender, marketable lifestyles and the allure of the traditional alongside the 'modern'. It transcended the marketing departments of individual private corporations, coalescing with governmental styles of nutrition promotion. While these visual representations were all stylistically unique and different, they rhetorically 'said' similar things about postwar Britain. In particular, they emphasised the role of women as mothers and wives in appropriating new nutrition behaviours. These behaviours centred on new modes of cooking, shopping and preserving food that changed not only the way we eat but also what we eat. Women, designated as the responsible agents for feeding were subsumed into a consumer culture intent on selling not only new products but new idealised, 'modern' lifestyles. By offering a carefully developed visual argument, these advertisements, whether public or private, signified the culmination of a fusing, not so much of art and industry, as art and publicity.[119]

While particular advertisements, designed and produced, by Unilever expounded the 'commercial, legible, illustrative and realist styles of mass culture' – a king of 'capitalist realism' – they were not operating in a vacuum.[120] On the contrary, numerous other public and private institutions actively engaged in the adoption and advancement of new visual techniques. The cross-transfer of expertise in the realm of the visual and graphic arts in this period ensured a dynamic and vibrant response to the calls of advertisers and health promoters alike. This movement would come to influence the nature, content, and visual rhetoric of not only food advertisements, but

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[119] J. B. Nicholas, 'Is British Art Fighting?', *Art and Industry* (1942), p. 105.

[120] Nicholas, 'Is British Art Fighting?', p. 123; 'capitalist realism' is a phrase coined by art critic Peter Fuller to describe advertising in Western Culture.

later a series of health education campaigns aimed at informing the public about the epidemiological link between diet and heart disease from the 1970s.

Governmental Nutrition Education and the Targeting of ‘Mother!’

As examined in Chapter One, during the Second World War numerous health campaigns encouraged the uptake of the welfare foods scheme. Such campaigns constructed mothers as responsible for the health and wellbeing of their children with specific reference to food and nutrition. As displayed in Figure 2.8, ‘Mother! Watch Him Grow’, this governmental emphasis on welfare, infants, and by extension mothers did not dissipate. Rather, its continued dissemination reveals important details about governmental concerns regarding health and nutrition during the 1950s. At the same time it marked a purposeful continuation of governmental campaigning within the realm of nutrition during peacetime. This reflected the wider development of health education using an array of striking visual and verbal language in conjunction with the mass media, to advocate behavioural change at an individual level. The origins of this approach in health education lay in the very particular development of postwar British public health, the emergence of mass consumption and the development and acceptance of risk-factor epidemiology. Collectively these factors forged a new role for health education. The choice of health education as an important policy response to changing patterns of disease was especially significant. Simultaneously, medicine was reorienting itself towards a public advice role and likewise successive governments adopted a new sense of responsibility to inform and advise its citizens rather than rely on indirect information provision.[121]

Throughout the 1950s and much of the 1960s, the Central Council for Health Education (CCHE) was the principal organisation operating in the arena of health

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[121] Berridge, *Marketing Health*, pp. 66-67.

education in Britain. Established in 1927 by the Society for Medical Officers of Health, it initially received no central funding from the Ministry of Health.[122] Consequently, the Council was reliant on irregular contributions from local authorities to fund its varied operations. Nevertheless, it instituted a variety of important campaigns aimed at improving the diet of the population by advocating the health benefits of certain foods such as eggs, milk, cheese and bread in addition to highlighting the benefits of regular excise.[123] Similarly, the Council instituted an array of health weeks, special exhibitions and local campaigns that varied in both focus and dimension.[124] Max Blythe posited that '[i]t was the work of the CCHE in the 1940s and 1950s that heralded and assisted a radical transformation of health education's horizons, from piecemeal and essentially propagandist campaigning to more holistic and educationally centred views of health promotion'.[125] Furthermore, he suggested that health education or propaganda offered a useful means for addressing what many Medical Officers of Health (MOsH) regard as the last great remaining hurdle for public health: the 'personal behaviour factor'.[126]

Certainly, the CCHE benefitted from the wartime interest and commitment to health education. In 1941, the popular Radio Doctor Charles Hill was appointed chairman of the CCHE. The Radio Doctor had played an important morale and propagandist role in British wartime culture. Mass health interventions, in addition to broadcasts directed at the whole population, facilitated the reconstruction of everyone as both equal citizens and patients in health and disease terms.[127] With the inception

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[122] Max Blythe, 'A History of the Central Council for Health Education, 1927-1968', p. 68; Ian Sutherland, *Health Education – Half a Policy: The rise and fall of the Health Education Council* (Cambridge: NEC, 1987), p. 16-17.
[123] Sutherland, *Health Education – Half a Policy*, p. 17.
[124] Sutherland, *Health Education – Half a Policy*, p. 17.
[125] Max Blythe, 'A History of the Central Council for Health Education, 1927-1968', p. ix.
[126] Blythe, 'A History of the Central Council for Health Education', p. 38.
[127] Anne Karpf, *Doctoring the Media: Reporting of Health and Medicine* (London: Routledge, 1988), p. 47.

of the Scottish Council for Health Education in 1943, the CCHE was able to use its many professional links to influence operations across regional administrations.[128] Similarly, in 1944 the Council extended its operations to Northern Ireland in dedicated efforts at harmonising educative efforts nationally.[129]

After the war, the CCHE flourished within the limits of its financial resources. It continued to provide important health education services to those health authorities willing to support the Council. In particular, it launched a poster and pamphlet campaign promoting immunisation against diphtheria and polio in addition to campaigns related to dental health and venereal disease.[130] Importantly, it also continued its pre-war commitment to professional training by organising courses for nurses and teachers about health education, a tradition that would continue under the auspices of its successor, the Health Education Council throughout the 1970s and 1980s.[131]

In very general terms, health education in Britain during the 1940s and 1950s tended to differ rather dramatically from that instituted in other national contexts. For example, cancer organisations in the US since the 1930s focused on a co-ordinated media 'blitz' using big-screen film and colour pamphlets to convey their message. Whereas, British efforts were focused throughout the interwar (and continuing into the postwar period) on local efforts, relying on structures of the less visually-arresting newspaper to achieve a media presence.[132] Films, mobile film trucks and mobile

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[128] Allen Daley, 'The Central Council for Health Education: The First Twenty-Five Years: 1927-1952' *Health Education Journal* 17:24 (1959), pp. 24-35.

[129] Daley, 'The Central Council for Health Education', p. 34.

[130] Limited list of CCHE advertising materials sourced from the 'Collections Online' resource of the Science Museum, the National Media Museum and the National Railway Museum. Accessed on 20 August 2013: http://collectionsonline.nmsi.ac.uk/detail.php?type=related&kv=119364&t=people

[131] Sutherland, *Health Education – Half a Policy*, p. 18.

[132] David Cantor, 'Uncertain Enthusiasm: The American Cancer Society, Public Education and Problems of the Movie, 1921-1960', *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 81 (2007), pp. 39-69; Ornella Moscucci, 'The British Fight against Cancer: Publicity and Education, 1900-1948, *Social History of Medicine* 23:2 (2007), pp.356-373; Elizabeth Toon, ''Cancer as the General Population Knows It':

displays were utilised at local level for raising awareness about disease.[133] These localised characteristics of health education in Britain facilitated varied and divergent approaches to health education across the country.

Bridget Towers, in her work on health education during the First World War, observed that health education policy was only of minimal importance to the wider development of a distinct national health policy in Britain.[134] To a large extent, local and voluntary organisations remained the central proponents of a health education approach to disease management for much of the first half of the twentieth century.[135] By the 1950s, a difficult balancing act was taking place at governmental level. While state confidence in the efficacy of education campaigns increased during the war, postwar health care services altered that relationship. For example, central government feared that education campaigns for cancer would precipitate increased demand for diagnostic and clinical facilities at a time when the government was assuming financial responsibilities for the national health services.[136] In contrast, nutritional campaigns were viewed differently during this period. In part, because central government viewed nutritional deficiency diseases as manageable, and also because diet had already been subject to governmental campaigning throughout the war, such continuation of governmental responsibility for the nutritional welfare of children was understood as an acceptable site for health education.

Knowledge, Fear and Lay Education in 1950s Britain', *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 81:1 (2007), pp. 117-118.

[133] For example see: Ian Levitt, 'TB, Glasgow and the Mass Radiography Campaign in the Nineteen Fifties: A Democratic Health Service in Action' (unpublished conference paper, Univeristy of Glasgow, 2003).

[134] Bridget Towers, 'Health Education Policy, 1916-1926: Venereal Disease and the Prophylaxis Dilemma', *Medical History* 24 (1980), pp. 70-87.

[135] For example, both during and after the First World War the philanthropic organisation: National Council for Combating Venereal Disease (NCCVD) was particularly proactive in initiating an array of educative measures directed at improving public knowledge about venereal diseases in Britain.

[136] Moscucci, 'The British Fight against Cancer', p. 357.

Thus, in the immediate postwar period, governmental health policy remained concerned with nutritional deficiency and many of the health campaigns initiated during the war were continued, expanded or only faintly altered during the 1950s. The longer-term governmental focus on deficiency as a central indicator of 'modernity' since the beginning of the century remained hard to dismiss in relation to diet and disease. This focus manifested itself in many aspects of governmental policy during the 1950s and achieved particular prominence in the discussion and publicity surrounding welfare foods. Throughout the immediate postwar period, the publicity machinery of government produced a variety of visual health promotion posters, leaflets and pamphlets. As has been discussed in relation to industry-produced margarine advertisements, this period was typified by a very definite thematic visual style centred on traditional gender roles, oftentimes framed as 'modern'. Governmental promotional materials were no exception, and to this end both the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food were particularly proactive in employing commercial advertising techniques more traditionally associated with postwar consumer culture. This cross-fertilisation of modes of dissemination served to have a homogenising effect on both the content and form of food publicity throughout the postwar period more generally.

Stemming from a rich wartime history that closely allied the visual techniques of artistic modernism to food publicity (as seen in the Stork advertisements above), state-funded advertisements for welfare foods assisted in bridging the acceptability of governmental propaganda in wartime with a peacetime setting.[137] Thus, continuity was retained not just in relation to the maintenance of the welfare foods programme, but also through the visual rhetoric employed as a linking device. In Figure 2.8,

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[137] See Chapter One; James Aulich, *War Posters: Weapons of Mass Communication* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2007);

mothers were instructed to adopt a certain pattern of state-approved behaviour. In ways similar to 'Milk – The Backbone of Young Britain' (displayed during the War and analysed in more detail in the Chapter One), 'Mother! – Watch him Grow' adopted clean lines and clear yet limited accompanying text, rather like the Stork advertisements above, which engaged widely with the contemporaneous shift towards graphic art and aesthetic simplicity in the field of British design.

Figure 2.12: 'Mother! Watch Him Grow', (TNA BN 10/216), 1954-1958.

The Ministry of Health during this period was particularly dedicated in attempting to reach working class mothers and encouraging them to avail of welfare foods for their children.[138] This poster, like the Stork advertisements produced by Unilever prioritised the visual elements over the textual. It juxtaposed the 'growing' infant, positioned in the background of the visual plane, and the multiple spoons set in the foreground, inferring notions of healthiness, vitality, and acceptable maternal care – by consuming cod liver oil, for example, daily childhood growth and development could be assured. The central image has an imminence created through repeated visual symbols. Growth depicted through the semi-circle chevron-like lines and the repeated spoon image indicated the necessity for daily welfare food consumption, thereby establishing a sense of immediacy in the text. This immediacy was further suggested by the ambivalent drop in the foreground – was it a teardrop? Or perhaps a lost drop of cod liver oil? This ambiguity, heightened by its position close to both the infant's eye and mouth, perhaps underscored the unpopularity of cod liver oil by child and mother alike. Furthermore, its assured sense of colour – primary in its palette – in conjunction with the exclamation mark after 'Mother!' reinforced the need for all mothers to pay close attention to governmental health information.

In this way the poster appeared egalitarian, advising *all* mothers of correct health behaviour, but in reality the welfare foods system was an increasingly means tested service and this lack of universality ensured that the real target of this poster was the working class, not the middle class mother.[139] If we are to understand the text-laden advertisements for the 'luxury' Blue Band margarine, centred on new domestic appliances and the stay-at-home wife and mother as targeting middle-class audiences, then both the largely visual Stork and welfare foods advertisements were

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[138] For more about Ministry of Health taking responsibility for the Welfare Foods Scheme and their continued visual focus on mothers and children see: TNA, MH 10/110, 'Transfer of Welfare Foods Scheme from Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food to Ministry of Health', 1955-1958; TNA, MH55/1561, 'Welfare foods: Publicity; Bulletins', 1945-1952; TNA BN1 10/216, 'Leaflets and posters: welfare foods and nutrition', 1954-1968.

[139] See: Webster, 'Government Policy on School Meals and Welfare Foods, 1939-1970', pp. 196-206.

directed at a working class audience concerned with cost and effort, perhaps because that mother was more likely to work. As Dolly Wilson Smith has revealed, the government, at both local and national level, rarely questioned the understanding that women's mothering duties were bound to the home and that 'working mothers resulted in delinquent children'.[140] For example, the Home Office was quick to link increased unemployment amongst married women to greatly reduced delinquency rates in Burnley during 1954.[141] While other statistics undermined this linkage, the Ministry of Health remained committed to educating working class women in raising their children, especially as throughout the 1950s and into the 1960s the lowest uptake of the welfare foods scheme remained amongst those from the lowest socio-economic classes.[142] Indeed, throughout the period 1950-1960, when on average one-third of all welfare food provisions were not taken up by eligible mothers and 'the poorer classes even less than this', the Conservative government examined the general health of mothers, infants and children and in the main found marked improvements in health. They ascertained that this was a problem of 'individual and particular families [that] did not require a general subsidy'.[143] The government therefore was increasingly concerned with the uptake of welfare foods amongst the working classes in particular. Such health education attempted to encourage mothers 'not rely[ing] on welfare foods as their source of vitamins [and who] have relied instead on natural foods'.[144]

In accordance with established visual arrangements, the symbolism in both governmental and industry sponsored publicity utilised gender as an explanatory tool. As gender identities were forged and reaffirmed through the division of labour, the continual visual insistence on the housewife as the traditional societal role for *all*

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[140] Wilson Smith, 'A New Look at the Affluent Worker', p. 208.
[141] Wilson Smith, 'A New Look at the Affluent Worker', p. 211.
[142] Welfare Foods. *House of Commons official report* (Hansard). 1962 13 Feb: cols 1280.
[143] Welfare Foods. *House of Commons official report* (Hansard). 1962 13 Feb: cols 1280-81.
[144] Welfare Foods. *House of Commons official report* (Hansard). 1962 13 Feb: cols 1280.

women served to reinstate such expectations rather than re-orientating them.[145] Wartime and postwar austerity gave housewives and mothers an enhanced sense of importance within the national struggle, especially as rationing and other domestic economy measures were vital for civilian health.[146] This sense of importance was amplified through governmental publicity that continued past the period of economic control. Consequently, Figure 2.8 adopted a direct address-style to Mothers specifically, within whose domain the care of children and control of food firmly fell. This fitted in with the visual narrative emerging from margarine advertisements produced by Unilever during the same period. By linking food with women, a visual continuity was created which could be replicated across publicity types. Therefore advertisements that focused on information provision and those encouraging increased sales adopted similar visual thematic tropes. These engaged with and prolonged a visual argument centred on gender and motherhood.

However, not all welfare foods publicity material engaged with mothers in such a direct and focussed manner. Some posters capitalised on the pre-existing relationship between welfare foods, child nutrition and mothers to convey nutrition information that visually prioritised a focus on the individual foodstuffs rather than visualisations of the child to target mothers. In ways not dissimilar to ‘Mother – don’t forget baby’s cod liver oil and orange juice’ (Figure 1.4) examined in Chapter One, the human element – usually the child consumer – was replaced with a more metaphorical approach to disseminating the nutrition message. While that example built upon social understandings of the stork as the safe harbinger of healthy children, such emphatic linking was not always necessary. The Ministry of Health ‘Orange

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[145] For more on women and gender roles in mid-twentieth century Britain see: Zweiniger-Bargielowska, *Women in Twentieth Century Britain* - particularly, Chapter 10: Housewifery.
[146] Zweiniger-Bargielowska, *Women in Twentieth Century Britain*, p. 154.

Juice' poster (Figure 2.9) from the mid-1950s adopted a clean-lined, modernist image centred on the orange tree to encourage the uptake of welfare foods.

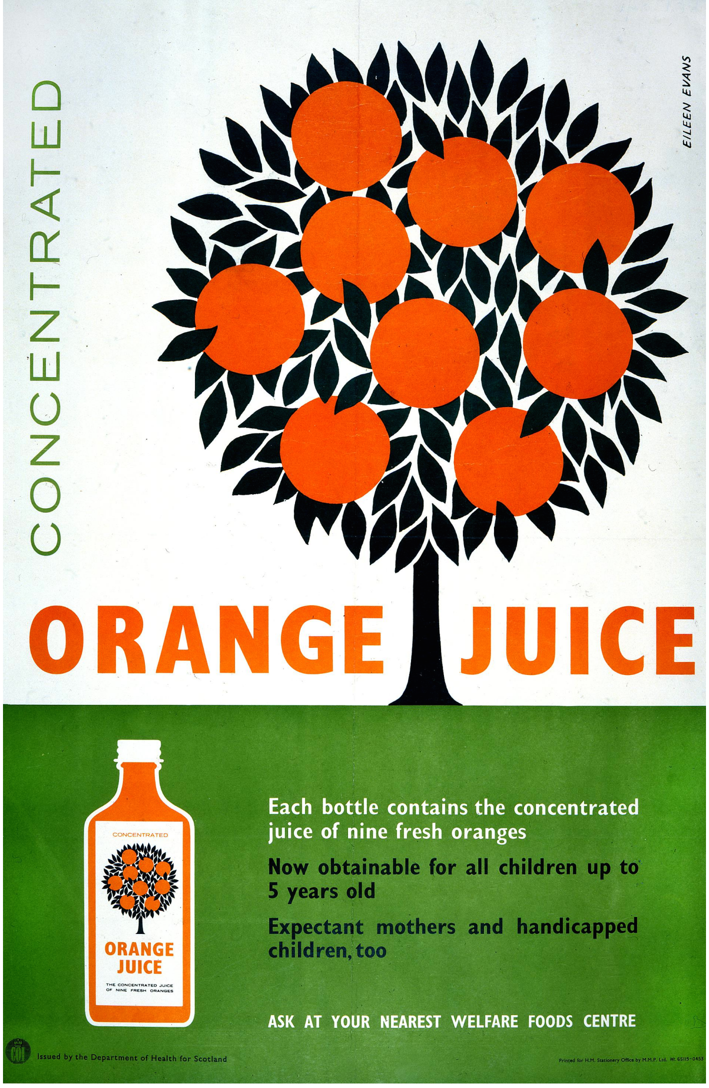

Figure 2.13: 'Concentrated Orange Juice' Poster (TNA BN 10/216), c. 1954-1957.

The modernist style of the bright orange circles overlaid onto and intermixed with the black leaves, while removed from realistic modes of visual representation, tied welfare foods to nature as well as agricultural food production, suggesting a lineage from tree to bottle. The background green of the text box, on which the trunk of the tree sits, like grass, further connected this poster with the natural environment. The choice of the orange tree referenced freshness – that the oranges in the bottle are intimately connected to the physical fruit – emphasised by the text accompaniment: ‘Each bottle contains the concentrated juice of nine fresh oranges’. While this poster explicitly avoided identifying the mother as the target audience, their presumed role as carers for children ensured that this targeting was implicitly clear.

The postwar focus on colour in health information material was not a development occurring in isolation. On the contrary, there was a general realignment in cultural society towards the benefits of colour as a means of inspiring visual curiosity, while it functioned to raise national spirits and herald the end of economic austerity.[147] The clarity of colour in this pamphlet represented a visual connection between its composition and educative role. During a period when colour was becoming invested with a utopian discourse surrounding, in particular, cinema’s potential to make a significant ideological and aesthetic contribution to ‘progress’ in the postwar world, the cultural fascination with colour was reflected in contemporaneous health education material.[148] Sarah Street has suggested that this ‘cultural fascination with colour (and the perceived lack of it)’ which had emerged during wartime austerity created an intensified interest in colour, both in everyday life and on screen.[149]

Similarly, Figure 2.10, ‘What to Eat and Why’, adopted a vibrant and visually stimulating colour scheme. Bold and expressionist in style, the poster employed a simplistic visual format that relied on very limited textual support. It functioned as a food chart, but rather than referencing the four-food group model (Figure 1.3), it sketched a small number of foods that contained particular health-giving properties, in

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[147] Sarah Street, ‘Cinema, Colour and the Festival of Britain, 1951’, *Visual Culture in Britain* 13:1 (2012), p. 85.
[148] Street, ‘Cinema, Colour and the Festival of Britain’, p. 85.
[149] Street, ‘Cinema, Colour and the Festival of Britain’, p. 85.

three distinct columns – meat, fish and dairy protein ‘For Growth and Renewal’, fruit and vegetables ‘For Vitality’, and potatoes, cereal, bread along with jam and butter ‘For Activity and Warmth’. In a manner evocative of the Hans Schleger designs of the 1930s and 1940s, it utilised an assured sense of colour and form to reinforce the need for a balanced diet.

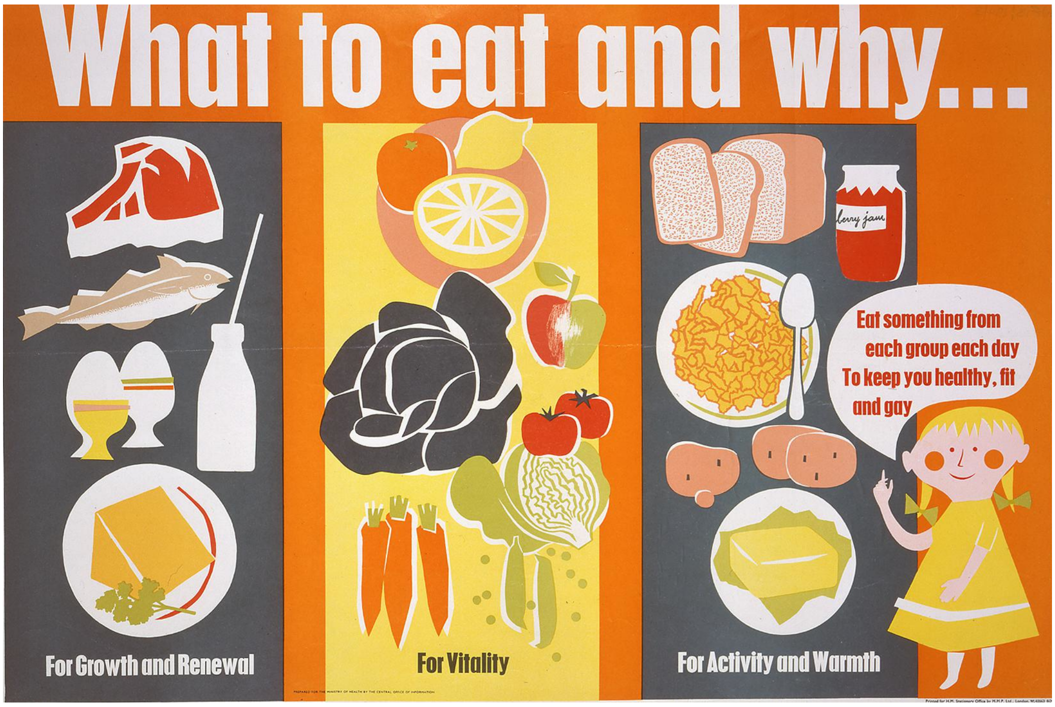

Figure 2.11: ‘What to eat and why …’ (TNA BN 10/216), 1964.

The design adopted a visual aesthetic grounded in expressionism, constructing the illustrated foods in bold colours, hard lines and compact shapes. Rather than relying on textual lists, the poster showed individual foodstuffs that comprised a balanced diet (and now once again readily available), assimilating preceding health charts centred on grouping foods according to function. The child figure advising ‘Eat something from each group each day To keep you fit, healthy and gay’, is reminiscent of the sketched children in Figure 1.3, but in this case the use of bright colour and simple geometric shapes – triangular body, spherical head, circular flushed cheeks etc. –

linked the importance of a balanced diet for all to the visual representation of the child in particular. The reliance on images here, rather than supporting text reflected a wider trend in governmental health education publicity to visualise, rather than textualise the nutrition message. Yet, as seen in the welfare foods schemes posters above, the government's interest in reaching the working class may have influenced their choice in using images as vehicles of communication rather than textual messages, themselves depended on the public 'reading them'. Therefore, as evident in relation to the wartime food charts discussed in Chapter One, this particular incarnation attempted to reconcile the need for precise nutritional information with the differing dietary knowledge of a population-level audience.

While health education relating to nutrition and welfare feeding received renewed governmental interest, chronic disease education remained tentative. This was in part because of the scientific uncertainty surrounding these new modes of causality, especially as they were discussed, rejected and remodelled within the scientific community. Diet was only one risk factor for chronic disease that came under fire as a result of a slow governmental policy response. The constructed networks that were shaping policy in mid-twentieth century Britain were important in developing and constraining governmental responses to disease risk. Again, the political implications of the epidemiological link between smoking and lung cancer produced a new working template on how networks in science and the media created important dialogues for shaping health policy.[150] This new template for health policy was subsequently applied to other disease aetiologies including the likely relationship between diet and the increased incidence of coronary heart disease.

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[150] See: Berridge, *Making Health Policy*; Loughlin, 'Networks of Mass Communication', pp. 295-322.

Like responses to smoking, governmental policy directed at diet and coronary heart disease has been categorised as a combination of ‘denial and delay’.[151] However, as evidenced by Berridge, this categorisation failed to take into account the myriad structural and strategic changes occurring contemporaneously in public health. The very nature of the complex advisory machinery of central government that linked the Ministry of Health with the Medical Research Council ensured, that to a large extent, policy delays were inevitable. Indeed, the contested nature of such epidemiological evidence during the 1950s and early 1960s, in addition to the central government’s politics of centralised health education, were early stumbling blocks to the adoption of coherent and direct policy measures. Epidemiology had yet to establish scientific legitimacy as an accurate indicator of disease risk. ‘Proof’ was still the key issue in wider political and public spheres. As a result, centralised efforts at health education for much of the 1950s and 1960s were concentrated on pre-established and accepted views of disease causality within pre-existing models of malnutrition. In the realm of food, two distinct areas of health campaigning were foremost; campaigns centred on deficiency diseases (often focussed on ‘vulnerable’ groups in society) and initiatives based on food hygiene.[152]

Whilst the responsibility for health education shifted back to the local level quite rapidly after the War, the government was increasingly alert to the merits of centralised education efforts in all Departments. In many respects, the Ministry of Transport’s drink-driving campaign of 1964 provided a blueprint for other Department’s interested in conducting similar types of multi-media, high impact education campaigns.[153] The form and content of the governmental information

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[151] For more on this categorisation of ‘denial and delay’ relating to smoking and lung cancer see: Berridge, *Marketing Health*, pp. 34-51.

[152] NA, BN 10/216; BN 10/217.

[153] Berridge and Loughlin, ‘Smoking and the New Health Education’, p. 959.

message was changing in this period. It now moved away from neutral and often indirect information provision and instead embraced direct advice. Indeed, Berridge and Loughlin have attested to the emerging process of 'policy seepage' and 'policy transfer' from the United States that actively influenced governmental approaches to health education specifically and health policy more generally.[154]

The passing of the National Health Service Act of 1946 established the Central and Scottish Health Services Council to advise the Minister of Health on matters affecting NHS operations.[155] By 1959 this Council was concerned with national health education services, partly as a result of the successful lobbying force of active health educators who sought a more thorough commitment to organisational coherency and greater national coordination of initiatives within a central agency.[156] Accordingly, the Health Services Council established a joint committee to consider recommendations for the future of health education under the chairmanship of Lord Cohen. It was convened in 1960 to report on the status and position of health education services nationally. The committee itself was comprised of twelve delegates, seven of whom were doctors.[157] Despite concluding that 'health education means different things to different people', they collectively recommended that the traditional health education emphasis (advice to mothers and specific action campaigns such as immunisation and vaccination) be replaced by a broader focus on human relationships including, but not limited to, sex education, mental health, smoking and obesity.[158] Ultimately, areas where middle class understandings of 'self-discipline' were key were highlighted as notable sites of change. Persuasion was now

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[154] Berridge and Loughlin, 'Smoking and the New Health Education', p. 959.

[155] Sutherland, *Health Education – Half a Policy*, p. 19.

[156] Berridge, *Marketing Health*, p. 73.

[157] Berridge, *Marketing Health*, pp. 73-74.

[158] Cohen Report, *Health Education: A Report of a Joint Committee of the Central and Scottish Health Services Councils* (London: HMSO, 1964), p.13.

heralded as the fundamental approach to the reoriented health education of the 1960s.[159] In its attempts to reinvigorate health education in response to changing patterns of disease, the Committee emphasised the important role the mass media could play.[160] The resulting Report established a marketing model for health education in Britain that remained highly influential in health policy-making and health pressure group circles in the subsequent decades.[161]

Perhaps the most important outcome of this Report in policy terms was its influence on the future direction of a centralised body responsible for health education services at a national level.[162] The committee considered the strengthening of the existing CCHE via substantial state financial support claiming that, 'the first requirement is to create at the centre a stronger organisation which will put new energy and thrust behind health education, and to review critically its results'.[163] However, ultimately, it opted for the establishment of a new body, believing this would overcome problems with the existing structure of the CCHE (which was weakened by its highly localised focus).[164] Despite some dissenting voices within the committee, a new centralised body, the Health Education Council, was formed in 1968. This new Council aimed to resolve many of those issues that plagued its predecessor by moving away from small-scale, locally governed (and funded) initiatives in favour of centralised programmes with the full support and financial backing of the Ministry of Health.

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[159] Report of the Royal College of Physicians, *Smoking and Health*, 1962, p. S2-70.

[160] Cohen Report, *Health Education*, p. 50-53.

[161] Berridge, *Marketing Health*, pp. 73-75; Sutherland, *Health Education – Half a Policy*, pp. 19-23.

[162] For more on the political deliberations about the creation of a new health education body see: Sutherland, *Health Education – Half a Policy*, pp. 19-33.

[163] Cohen Report, *Health Education*, p. 86.

[164] Cohen Report, *Health Education*, Recommendation 19.

Conclusion

As the 1950s and 1960s progressed the government gradually began to recognise the changing health status of the majority population in Britain. Various nutritional and medical issues had become increasingly visible in the post-war period. The changing focus of public health both precipitated and reflected these changes in disease aetiology and the altering methods that the government adopted to manage them. However, this proved a slow process and even by the 1970s nutrition policy still focussed on the ‘vulnerable’ few, with welfare foods still high on the political agenda as the indicator for measurable ‘modernity’. Nonetheless, the immediate postwar period heralded important changes in health advertising. While in terms of heart disease and diet, these shifts had yet to come to fruition, nutrition and childhood health remained important components of government health advertising. They linked thematically with Unilever’s margarine advertisements, emphasising traditional gender roles and the individualistic conceptions of health. These product advertisements utilised implicit notions of freshness, itself linked to understandings of clean food as healthy food and as such, they represented an important first stage in the reorientation of Unilever’s margarine products toward health, later epitomised by Flora (as shown in Chapter Four).

This chapter has analysed the advertising output of Unilever P.L.C. and the publicity material produced by the Ministry of Health that focussed on welfare feeding and childhood nutrition during the 1950s and early 1960s. It has exposed how these visual representations of food during the period of decontrol constructed food and diet in terms of gender roles, individualism and continuing concerns about the health of children, and especially working class children. The continued emphasis on wife and mother roles in advertising diets revealed the postwar anxiety about women and their social positioning during a time when there was a slow sea change in lived experience. Whether commercial or governmental, these advertisements promoted a 'modern' perception of domesticity. For the former, the wife and mother may still have been depicted at home, but the inclusion within the visual plane of a variety of domestic appliances in addition to new consumer products focused on convenience that constructed both stay-at-home and working mothers as interested in time-saving on domestic tasks while not compromising on taste or efficacy. Similarly, government campaigns implicitly focused on the working class mother and constructed the healthy infant and child as central aspects of the postwar 'modern' project.

By integrating into extant state policy, which was slowly embracing a new public health mandate centred upon the legitimation of scientific findings, the understanding that diet might impact upon chronic disease gradually translated into the adoption of a specific nutrition education policy. This policy was itself largely based on behaviour modification and lifestyle choice, both important principal tenets within post-war epidemiology and the 'new public health'.[165] The primacy of the individual within public health was being formed by the emergent risk-agenda, by governmental information campaigns and by the very aetiology of these chronic disease types. This individualisation, at every level of the food discourse during this period, revealed the distinct position that personal responsibility and individual choice were beginning to play at a national level. The food industry would also engage with this emerging individualised rhetoric as the avenues for information dissemination about food broadened within the context of consumerism and mass marketing. As we shall see in Chapter Four, Unilever was particularly quick to capitalise on the

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[165] Virginia Berridge, *Marketing Health*; Virginia Berridge, *Making Health Policy;* Virginia Berridge, 'Medicine and the Public: The 1962 Report of the Royal College of Physicians and the New Public Health', *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 81:1 (2007), pp. 286-311.

language of behavioural change for product diversification and in doing so, they launched the first ‘health’ margarine in Britain in 1968.

As Virginia Berridge has suggested, the wartime and immediate postwar emphasis on civic responsibility and ideas of citizenship was replaced by a focus on propaganda and persuasion, utilising consumerist practices.[166] Education and persuasion found a new social climate within print, radio and television advertising as the international proliferation of chronic diseases continued apace. By the 1970s, the idea that ‘if the mass media are effective in the promotion of numerous goods and services to the consumer, then the media should be equally effective in the dissemination of health information’ had gained ground within central government.[167] Not only was the government maintaining its wartime involvement in nutrition education at some level, but Unilever’s margarine industry was also forging important new markets that would later pave the way for its expansion into the field of health products and health education. Visual coherency was centred on recurrent themes of gender, individualism and modernity, and both of these public and private interests coalesced during this period to establish a very particular visual rhetoric around food. This visual linkage would continue but the body would increasingly be identified as part of ‘selling’ food as a modern medicine. As the 1970s progressed new health concerns about coronary heart disease and diet began to impinge more substantially on nutrition and health policy. And within this context, health education, food marketing and the maintenance of a visual food aesthetic would attain a new importance.

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[166] Berridge, *Marketing Health*, p. 53.

[167] H.J. Barnum Jnr, ‘Mass Media and Health Communications’, *Journal of Medical Education* 50 (1975), p. 24.

3

Visualising the Body Beautiful: Health Education and Selling Nutrition during the 1970s and 1980s

Overweight? Tucking in your tummy isn't the answer!
Eat less of those higher calorie foods like fry-ups, jams, cakes and biscuits. Instead, eat more low calorie foods like wholemeal bread, fresh fruit and vegetables. Even potatoes.
You'll be in better shape all round if you lose a few pounds. And you'll feel better too.

Figure 3.14: 'Do You Hold Your Breath When a Man Looks at You?' poster HEC: 'Look After Yourself' campaign, (Science & Society Picture Library 10411688), 1980.

‘Do you hold your breath when a man looks at you?’ With this challenge the Health Education Council (HEC), the national body responsible for communicating health information to the public, brought the question of healthy nutrition to the attention of the British people in 1980. Their poster was comprised of two equal sized images that occupied the majority of the visual plane, accompanied by only minimal explanatory text, itself confined to the bottom quarter of the poster. By depicting two ‘versions’ of a bikinied female body as examples of ‘unhealthy’ and ‘healthy’ body types, this poster raises interesting questions about how the visual components of health education material sought to sell nutrition as an object of health and modernity. By suggesting a differentiation between ‘ugly’ and ‘beautiful’ bodies the poster evoked a long history of medical images that constructed disease in relation to the dichotomous representation of the diseased body as ‘ugly’ and the healthy body as ‘beautiful’.[1] As discussed by Sander Gilman, this division has been established as an effective, if contentious way to convey health information from eighteenth century portrayals of madness and lunacy to the variety of posters produced to combat the widespread fear and ignorance surrounding the AIDS epidemic of the 1980s.[2]

Moreover, the parallels with commercial advertising, which similarly established particular notions of beauty as a marketing tool, emphasised how a visual language around ideas of health and beauty were expounded across various platforms, be they governmental or business-led during this period.[3] Ina Zweiniger-

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[1] Sander Gilman, *Health and Illness: Images of Difference* (London: Reaktion Books, 1995), pp. 51-66 and 115-172.

[2] Gilman, *Health and Illness*, pp. 51-66; Roger Cooter and Claudia Stein, ‘Coming into Focus: Posters, power and visual culture in the history of medicine’, *Medizinhistorisches Journal* 42 (2007), pp. 180-209; Cooter and Stein, ‘Visual Imagery and Epidemics in the Twentieth Century’, in *Imagining Illness: Public Health and Visual Culture*, ed. by David Serlin (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010), pp. 169-192; Allan Brandt, *No Magic Bullet: A Social History of Venereal Disease in the United States since 1880* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), pp. 183-204.

[3] For more on the utilisation of gender difference and beauty ideals in commercial advertising see: Anne M. Cronin, *Advertising and Consumer Citizenship: Gender, Images and Rights* (London: Routledge, 2000), pp. 105-132; Trevor Millum, *Images of Women: Advertising in Women’s Magazines*

Bargielowska argued that, as a wider-range of beauty products (and health foods) were marketed to a greater number of women, ‘the underlying message that anybody could and should aspire to emulate the contemporary [beauty] ideal’ came to suffuse other fields of advertising.[4] Within this process, the visual image was of considerable importance in representing how the body reflected and extended the creation of individualised identities.[5] Visual representations therefore reveal not only aesthetic considerations, but also particular moral attitudes towards personal characteristics such as laziness, greed or overeating. It was not just the food industry that utilised such visual representations to sell consumer goods. Increasingly, government-sponsored health education, attuned to the value of publicity and market research within community health, capitalised on both consumer demand for health and slimming foods and the cultural capital associated with achieving an ideal, healthy body-type.[6]

This chapter utilises the analytic lens of visual representations to explore food as an agent of preventive health sold to and consumed by the individual during the 1970s and 1980s. Each image, whether static or moving, has a particular and distinct

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(London: Chatto and Windus, 1975); Marita Sturken and Lisa Cartwright, *Practices of Looking: An Introduction to Visual Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 48-49, 82-83 and 214-216.

[4] Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska, ‘The Body and Consumer Culture’, in *Women in Twentieth Century Britain*, ed. by Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska (Harlow: Pearson Education Limited, 2001), p. 183. While a considerable amount of academic work has been conducted in relation to women, masculinity has only recently been considered. See: Richard Elliott and Christine Elliott, ‘Idealized images of the male body in advertising: a reader-response exploration’, *Journal of Marketing Communications* 11:1 (2005), pp. 3-19; Maurice Patterson and Richard Elliott, ‘Negotiating Masculinities: Advertising and the Inversion of the Male Gaze’, *Consumption, Markets and Culture* 5:3 (2002), pp. 231-249; Jonathan E. Shroeder and Detlev Zwick, ‘Mirrors of Masculinity: Representation and Identity in Advertising Images’, *Consumption, Markets and Culture* 7:1 (2004), pp. 21-52.

[5] Zweiniger-Bargielowska, ‘The Body and Consumer Culture’, p. 185.

[6] For more on the development of ideal body-types during the twentieth century see: Zweiniger-Bargielowska, ‘The Body and Consumer Culture’, pp. 183-197; Joan Jacobs Brumberg, *The Body Project: An Intimate History of American Girls* (New York: Random House, 1997). Avner Offer, ‘Body Weight and Self-Control in the USA and Britain since the 1950s’, *Social History of Medicine* 14:1 (2001), pp. 79-106; Offer, *The Challenge of Affluence: self-control and well-being in the United States and Britain since 1950* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2006); Susan Bordo, *Unbearable Weight: Feminism, Western Culture and the Body* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003); Mike Featherstone, ‘The Body in Consumer Culture’, *Theory, Culture and Society* 1 (1982), pp. 18-33; Victoria de Grazia and Ellen Furlough, *The Sex of Things: Gender and Consumption in Historical Perspective* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996).

visual style or aesthetic; rather than arguing for a shared ‘look’ amongst these representations, I will analyse how each of them, in their own way, attempted to promote particular food and health behaviours. The content and form of my first image (Figure 3.1) serves to contextualise the wider themes and issues that I analyse in this chapter. In attempting to sell nutrition, the visual evidence raises further discussion points about health information provision, the ideology of low fat diets, gender, and food as a ‘modern’ medicine. I explore these issues within the context of changing approaches to British health education and new developments in food policy during this period.[7]

In applying the methodology of visual culture and film studies to close readings of key nutrition education material, both printed and broadcast, I will emphasise their role as forms of communication. By treating them as such, I reveal not only what messages they conveyed, but also *how* they were transmitted in visual and audio-visual forms. In doing so, I argue that such objects of health education operated as more than mere educational aids; they were also important ‘vehicles of scientific communication’.[8] After providing a background to national nutritional policy and the re-organisation of health education, which were key influences in shaping the forms nutrition education took during this period, I will question how the visualities and vocabularies used to teach the public about food, diet and health were coded with notions of beauty, gender, modernity and individual responsibility. As chronic diseases, particularly heart disease and lung cancer, were re-conceptualised in

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[7] I borrow the term ‘ideology of low fat’ from Ann F. La Berge’s article: ‘How the Ideology of Low Fat Conquered America’, *Journal of the History of Medicine and the Allied Sciences* 63:2 (2008), pp. 139-177. La Berge uses the term *ideology* as it encapsulates the idea that low fat became an overarching belief within American medical and diet cultures in the 1980s and 1990s. A similar process occurred in Britain to which the term *ideology* could also be usefully applied.

[8] Tim Boon, *Films of Fact: A History of Science in Documentary Films and Television* (London: Wallflower Press, 2008), p. 6. In his introduction, Boon built upon the work of Steve Shapin who argued that the history of science should also be studied from the perspective of the ‘vehicles used to communicate between science and the public’, pp. 3-6.

terms of risk and individualism, images of such diseases took on new meanings. It is these meanings that this chapter seeks to decode, problematise and historicise in relation to their own health education and community health context.

Situating the Beautiful Body as Healthy

Much historical study that has focussed on health and the body in relation to rising weight and obesity has adopted a socio-cultural and/or feminist perspective.[9] In the main, these analyses focus on the cultural pressures for women (almost exclusively) to achieve and maintain culturally contingent 'ideal' body weights and shapes. They all identified the body as a key site for the construction of femininity and the self. Within this feminist tradition, Susan Bordo singled out the role of images, particularly in the age of the digital, as a key agent in promoting contemporary ideals about weight, body shape and beauty. In doing so she suggested that 'images of slenderness are never "just pictures" … but they speak to young people not just about how to be beautiful but about how to become what the dominant culture admires'.[10] This belief that images act in more complicated and noteworthy ways in influencing how people perceive both themselves and their own cultural context is particularly pertinent for this thesis. By suggesting that concepts of beauty are context and time specific, nutritional health campaigns' visual representations of the body can similarly reflect and uphold prevailing notions of healthiness and its correlations with beauty and personal attractiveness. In similar ways, Laura Mulvey's key essay 'Visual Pleasure

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[9] Peter N. Stearns, *Fat History: Bodies and Beauty in the Modem West* (New York: New York University Press, 1997) does afford limited attention to similar male pressures to achieve healthy body weights and attractive figures. For more on slimming and dieting see: Sharlene Hesse-Biber, *Am I Thin Enough Yet? The Cult of Thinness and the Commercialization of Identity* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1998); Naomi Wolf, *The Beauty Myth: How Images of Beauty are Used Against Women* (London: Vintage, 1991); Roberta Seid, *Never Too Thin: Why Women are at War with their Bodies* (New York: Prentice Hall Press, 1989).

[10] Bordo, *Unbearable Weight*, p. xxi.

and Narrative Cinema', while only in specific reference to film, argued that 'socially established interpretation[s] of sexual difference … controls images, erotic ways of looking and spectacle'.[11] It is this pleasure in looking, which Mulvey terms *scopophilia,* that established a 'male gaze' in the cinema where the woman evidences a '*to-be-looked-at-ness*'.[12] This theoretical awareness of the gaze and the reflective loop this has in the production of images is particularly noteworthy. John Berger's interpretation of the gaze argues that '*men act* and *women appear*. Men look at women. Women watch themselves being looked at'.[13] Both of these interpretations are pertinent in any study of the body, male or female, which employs visual evidence as a central resource because they raise questions regarding not only the figurations of the body, but also its stylisation in terms of beauty, movement and gesture.

While Mulvey's work dovetailed with second-wave feminism's engagement with the politics of the image, and the moving image in particular, close textual readings remain the exception rather than the rule. Generally those feminist and cultural studies enquiries that focused on the body failed to analyse in detail the function of visual representations of that body, food or health within these construction processes. As suggested by Joan Jacobs Brumberg, cultural preoccupations with self-reflection as an identity indicator, and as espoused in the pages of women's magazines and in movies, for example, created the power of the personal image. And certainly, this centrality of images – whether metaphorical or material – elevated the importance of visual evidence as an instructional and pedagogical tool when analysing how bodies were represented for the purposes of health education.

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[11] Laura Mulvey, 'Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema', in *Visual and Other Pleasures*, ed. by Laura Mulvey (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), p. 14.
[12] Mulvey, 'Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema', p. 19.
[13] John Berger, *Ways of Seeing* (London: British Broadcasting Corporation and Penguin Books, 2008), p. 47. For a fuller analysis of Berger's argument see pp. 45-47.

Now while feminists have identified the body, and especially the female body, as a site upon which male authority has been directed within society, it has also been recognised as a similar site of institutional and societal power. Michel Foucault expounded a concept of power centred upon medical knowledge and particularly medical institutions. This power was based on the micro-management of human bodies through discipline.[14] He suggested that power did not derive solely from social and political institutions, nor was it exercised merely through the introduction of coercive techniques.[15] Rather it operated through the body, which was itself directly involved in the political field.[16] Foucault developed this idea of a medical or 'clinical gaze' to explain the social power of surveillance by which institutional powers acquire knowledge about their subjects.[17] Ultimately power was established as an omnipresent force even amongst the apparently powerless in which people internalise a managerial gaze that makes them behave and conform.[18] Within this intellectual re-orientation of power and the body, Roger Cooter and Claudia Stein similarly argued that 'surveillance, whether it is active or not, produces conforming behaviour – "docile bodies" – which act exactly as they are expected without being forced to'.[19]

Yet, if the gaze is an important element in the acquisition of knowledge of the social subject, then it is similarly fundamental in the realisation of that subject's self-knowledge and self-management.[20] If it is possible to provide pleasure in being looked at, the antithesis of this, the ability to provide *displeasure* or dissatisfaction in being looked at appropriates the principles of a 'male gaze' that still splits the viewers

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[14] Cooter and Stein, 'Coming into focus', pp. 180-209.
[15] Cooter and Stein, 'Coming into focus', p. 194.
[16] Cooter and Stein, 'Coming into focus', p. 194.
[17] Michel Foucault, *The Birth of the Clinic: An Archaeology of Medical Perception*, trans. by A. M. Sheridan (London: Routledge, 1973; repr. 1986), pp. xi-xii.
[18] Jones and Porter, 'Introduction', p. 9.
[19] Cooter and Stein, 'Coming into focus, p. 194.
[20] John Orr, *Cinema and Modernity* (Cambridge: Polity Press 1993), p. 62.

experience of ‘looking’.[21] In this sense, ‘looking’ not only creates awareness of an object (such as an image or a screen), but of also *being* an object – of seeing the image as oneself and simultaneously not the same as oneself.[22] I therefore suggest that this omnipresent nature of the gaze in the spectatorial relationship can similarly create an internalised gaze centred on instigating some form of action on the part of the individual viewer.

While Foucauldian thought has centred on institutions as the primary architect of power on the body, Mike Featherstone has identified consumer culture as another key exponent. He argued that ‘consumer culture latches onto the prevalent self-preservationist conception of the body’ and that ‘the body is proclaimed as a vehicle of pleasure: it is desirable and desiring and the closer the actual body approximates to the idealised images of youth, health and beauty the higher its exchange-value’.[23] In proposing that idealised images have a greater cultural value than more credible representations which account for the individual relationship between food intake and energy expenditure that govern body size, Featherstone furthered that advertising, feature articles and advice columns each asked individuals to assume personal responsibility for their appearance. Therefore, the visualisation of the body in all aspects of life served as important evidence of the changing societal standards of beauty and the twentieth century’s increasing preoccupation with personal appearance on the part of both men and women alike.[24]

By aligning beauty and body-size with health within the context of consumer culture, visual representations of the body in health education drew on similar and

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[21] Jacques Lacan, ‘The Split between the Eye and the Gaze’ in *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis*, trans. by Alan Sheridan (New York: Norton, 1978) pp. 67-78.

[22] Sturken and Cartwright, *Practices of Looking*, p. 81.

[23] Mike Featherstone, ‘The Body and Consumer Culture’ *Theory, Culture and Society* 1 (1982), pp. 18 and 21-22.

[24] Peter Burke, *Eyewitnessing: The Uses of Images as Historical Evidence* (London: Reaktion Books, 2001), p. 9.

existing visual formulae to capture complex medical realities, rendering them accessible. By coding disease in terms of particular visual attributes and specific practical preventive measures, such as eating less and exercising more, images can therefore function to express and articulate specific health ideologies. Certainly during the 1970s and 1980s, a variety of governmental policy documents, the development of co-ordinated and dedicated health education programmes, and the approval of population-level nutritional guidelines all facilitated the emergence of visual representations that elevated beautiful bodies as sought-after entities within the contemporary consumer culture.

Health Education and a Nutritional Health Policy

From the 1960s body weights in Britain were steadily rising, and so too were associated diseases, particularly heart disease.[25] A range of scientific studies including the Framingham Heart Study and the Seven Countries study led by Ancel Keys conducted in the United States, suggested a strong correlation between diets high in saturated fat and the increased incidence of coronary heart disease.[26] Indeed, it was the Framingham Heart Study that first termed contributory variables as ‘risk factors’, and together with the work of Richard Doll and Austin Bradford-Hill on smoking and lung cancer at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, helped to

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[25] T. Khosla and C. R. Lowe, 'Height and Weight of British Men', *Lancet* no. 7545, 742-5 (6 April 1968); J. N. Morris, J. A. Heady, P. A. B. Raffle, C. G. Roberts and J. W. Parks, ‘Coronary Heart Disease and Physical Activity of Work’ *The Lancet* (1953), pp. 1053-57 and pp. 1111-20; Jerry Morris, ‘Coronary Thrombosis: A Modern Epidemic’, *The Listener*, 8 December 1955, pp. 995-996.

[26] Ancel Keys, *Seven Countries: A Multivariate Analysis of Death and Coronary Heart Disease* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1980); William G. Rothstein, *Public Health and the Risk Factor: A History of an Uneven Medical Revolution* (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2003). The Framingham Heart Study is a long-term (and ongoing) cardiovascular study carried out in the Massachusetts town of Framingham. It commenced in 1948 and is responsible for ascertaining much of the now common knowledge about heart disease and the effects of diet, exercise and cigarette smoking. It was the first of study of its type to determine an epidemiologically-based understanding of disease and was particularly influential in raising awareness, medically and socially, of the importance of prevention measures.

change the focus of epidemiology and public health from epidemic diseases to chronic conditions during the 1950s and 1960s.[27] Therefore, the link between diet and heart disease held that diets that were high in saturated fat and cholesterol were a major cause of coronary heart disease and consequently a major public health issue. In conjunction with this elevation of diet as a risk factor for disease within the scientific community, the postwar rise of expert committees as important components of governmental policy-making procedure allowed scientific ideas and the findings of randomised control trials to be distilled (albeit with variable degrees of efficacy) into governmental health policy.[28] As outlined in Chapter Two, within this process, public health adopted the tenets of marketing to communicate and inculcate risk-avoiding behaviour in the population. And in doing so, postwar public health marketed the science of chronic disease epidemiology to a mass audience.[29]

Judged in the light of its postwar proliferation, coronary heart disease was coded from the 1960s within the context of burgeoning affluence in Britain.[30] It is widely held that the rise of affluence in the postwar years had a profound impact on

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[27] For a succinct outline of this development of lifestyle public health and evidence-based medicine see: Virginia Berridge, Martin Gorsky and Alex Mold, *Public Health in History* (Maidenhead: Open Univeristy Press, McGraw Hill, 2011), pp. 198-199. See also: Virginia Berridge, *Marketing Health*: *Networks in Research and Policy after 1945* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2005), pp. 23-80; Berridge and Kelly Loughlin, 'Smoking and the New Health Education in Britain 1950s-1960s', *American Journal of Public Health: Public Health Then and Now* 95 (2005), pp. 956-964. This was also an early example of the cross-national transfer of health policy models establishing an internationalism for health – see: Berridge, *Marketing Health*, pp. 162-164.

[28] Charles Webster, *The Health Services since the War: Volume I: Government and Health Care: The National Health Service, 1958-1979* (London: HMSO, 1996), pp. 543-544; David F. Smith and Jim Philips, *Food, Science, Policy and Regulation in the Twentieth Century: International and Comparative Perspectives* (London: Routledge, 2000). The rise of the expert committee in postwar British health policy is outlined in Chapter Two. See also: Berridge, *Marketing Health*, pp. 132-160 ; Berridge, 'The Policy Response to the Smoking and Lung Cancer Connection in the 1950s and 1960s', *The Historical Journal* 49 (2006), pp. 1185-1209; Bufton, 'British Expert Advice on Diet and Heart Disease' in *Making Health Policy*, ed. by Berridge, pp. 125-148. However, it is important to note that within this policy-making context, the power of experts to bring about meaningful change within the existing structures of government was largely limited and their successes were tempered by this process.

[29] Berridge, *Marketing Health*, pp. 1-5.

[30] For a discussion of living standards and consumption patterns in wartime and postwar Britain and their connection with diet and health see: Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska, 'Living Standards and Consumption' in *A Companion to Contemporary Britain 1939-2000*, ed. by Paul Addison and Harriet Jones (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), pp. 226-244.

emerging consumer cultures.[31] As living standards and mass consumption increased, an important paradox emerged – affluence was not accompanied by increased wellbeing but rather a significant rise in obesity and mortality from chronic diseases, especially heart disease.[32] This represented an important break with the interwar and wartime promotion of health and fitness as a modern project, closely correlated to the contemporary gender norms of the period.[33] As Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska has outlined, a fitness culture emerged during the interwar years, which for women was closely related to women's liberation.[34] For men, this trend towards losing weight and bodily fitness was coded in terms of a wider crisis in masculinity strongly linked to concerns over physical degeneration and racial decline.[35] In the postwar period however, as national concerns over decline were replaced by health risks resulting from increased living standards, an abundant food supply and sedentary working environments, fitness and weight reduction became ever more clearly connected to disease prevention while still inferring the dangers associated with modern urban life.[36] In particular, heart disease was framed as a disease stemming from a population-wide rise in prosperity and associated 'modern' lifestyles and diets.[37]

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[31] Dominic Sandbrook, *Never Had It so Good: A History of Britain from Suez to the Beatles* (London: Little Brown Book Group, 2005); Arthur Marwick, *British Society since 1945* (London: Penguin Books, 1992); Tony Judt, Postwar: *A History of Europe since 1945* (London: Vintage, 2010), pp. 324-359; Mike Savage, 'Affluence and Social Change in the Making of Technocratic Middle-Class Identities: Britain 1939-55', *Contemporary British History* 22:4 (2008), pp. 457-476; Peter Hennessey, *Having It So Good: Britain in the Fifties* (London: Penguin Books, 2006).

[32] Offer, 'Body Weight and Self-Control', p. 79.

[33] Zweiniger-Bargielowska, 'The Making of the Modern Female Body: beauty, health and fitness in interwar Britain, *Women's History Review* 20:2 (2011), pp. 299-317; Zweiniger-Bargielwoska, 'The Culture of the Abdomen: Obesity and Reducing in Britain, circa 1900-1939', *Journal of British Studies* 44:2 (2005), pp. 239-273. In this interwar and wartime context health and fitness was centered on notions of eating more food, not less and exercising to be a fit and therefore 'useful' citizen rather than disease prevention.

[34] Zweiniger-Bargielowska, 'The Making of the Modern Female Body', pp. 299-317.

[35] Zweiniger-Bargielowska, 'The Culture of the Abdomen', pp. 239-273. See also: G. R. Searle, *The Quest for National Efficiency: A Study in British Politics and Political Thought, 1899-1914* (London: Ashfield, 1971); Matthew Thomson, *The Problem of Mental Deficiency: eugenics, democracy and social policy in Britain c. 1870-1959* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998); Donald MacKenzie, 'Eugenics in Britain', *Social Studies of Science* 6:3/4 (1975), pp. 499-532.

[36] Zweiniger-Bargielowska in her essay on reducing and obesity during the first half of the twentieth century elucidates how obesity in Edwardian society was often associated with crime, inferior racial or

Within this context, the government promoted risk-avoiding behaviour as a fundamental element of its public health agenda. In particular, the Health Education Council (HEC) appropriated an important role in publicising healthy behaviours to the population. Established in 1968 the HEC was a national, non-governmental body that replaced the Central Council for Health Education as the main vehicle for disseminating population-level health information.[38] From the outset the ultimate aim of the HEC was 'to help people live in a state of harmony with themselves and the community as a whole' and therefore was largely engaged with increasing individual awareness of not only personal habits detrimental to health, but also how such behaviour affected the community at large.[39] As Berridge has traced in relation to smoking and lung cancer, mass media campaigns were an increasingly important public health strategy that began to focus on the role of individual risks to health in order to advocate behavioural change.[40] Her work on the 1960s and 1970s has concentrated on the formation of health policy, focussing on the scientific outlook of public health and the various networks that have shaped its development. Notably, the role of the visual within the marketing of health is largely absent.[41]

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social classes and notably, notions of transgression. And while largely understood in relation to the contemporary quest for national efficiency, progression and the attainment of the fit, healthy and attractive modern body were important secondary themes during the first rise of obesity in the early years of the twentieth century. See: Zweiniger-Bargielowska, 'The Culture of the Abdomen', pp. 239-273.

[37] In this context 'modern lifestyles and diets' refers to changes in living standards brought about by the escalation of sedentary occupations, increased availability of a variety of foodstuffs and convenience foods and a reduction in daily physical activity brought about in part by the rise of the personal motorcar, which all increased after the lifting of rationing in 1954. For more detail on the rise of convenience foods and the supermarket in British postwar consumer culture see Chapter Two.

[38] For more on the formation and later reconstitution of the Health Education Council see: Ian Sutherland, *Health Education – Half a Policy: The Rise and Fall of the Health Education Council* (Cambridge: National Extension College Publications, 1987). For more on the CCHE see Chapter Two and Max Blythe, 'A History of the Central Council for Health Education, 1927-1968' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Oxford, 1987).

[39] TNA, FP 1/1, 'Health Education Council papers: Health Education Meetings', (1973).

[40] Berridge, *Marketing Health*, p. 53.

[41] A noteworthy exception is Berridge and Loughlin, 'Smoking and the New Health Education in Britain 1950s-1960s', pp. 956-964, but this still falls short of analsying these images in terms of meaning construction.

Yet health policy and the mass media intersected with the visual in very interesting ways during this period, especially as better health campaigns received dedicated consideration by the HEC.[42] Public health provided the media with reliable and popular content and expertise while the media provided public health with an existing modern communications system for the powerful delivery of health messages.[43] This was (and still is) a symbiotic relationship, which threw into sharp relief the blurred boundaries between entertaining education and educational entertainment.[44] As with the governmental reliance on visual representations in public information material during the Second World War, postwar images in health education, while less widespread, were 'cultural products that participate in and produce cultural meanings as they name, describe, and depict disease'.[45] Thus, this chapter is interested in how health posters and documentary films employed particular representational strategies that functioned as part of a social apparatus within community medicine in the postwar period.

As cultural products that conveyed information, the visual representations of diet and disease that this thesis explores transmitted a variety of messages that were

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[42] The first dedicated 'better health' campaign was the 'Look After Yourself' campaign that was launched by the HEC in 1978. It intended to address the health effects of diet, lack of exercise and cigarette smoking in a shared campaign that aimed to educate the public on the inter-connectedness of many risk factors in disease aetiology. TNA, Health Education Council papers, Health Education Meetings (1977, 1978, 1979) FP 1/5, FP 1/6, FP 1/7.

[43] Leslie J. Reagan, Nancy Tomes and Paula A. Treichler, 'Introduction: Medicine, Health and Bodies in American Film and Television', in *Medicine's Moving Pictures: Medicine, Health and Bodies in American Film and Television* (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2007), p. 2.

[44] Reagan, Tomes and Treichler, 'Introduction', p. 7.

[45] Leslie J. Reagan, 'Engendering the Dread Disease: Women, Men and Cancer', *American Journal of Public Health* 87 (1997), p.1779. By 'less widespread' I mean that visual promotional and educational posters and leaflets reduced in scope, content and sheer number after the end of war and lifting of the numerous governmental controls that the conflict precipitated. As infectious disease decreased (especially as penicillin became widely available) health education was increasingly confined to localised, short-term efforts such as the anti-venereal disease campaign conducted in Lambeth and Wandsworth during 1973/74 and which was a direct response to rising diagnoses during those years. See: TNA, Health Education Council papers, Health Education Meetings (1973, 1974), FP 1/1, FP 1/2. It was only with the AIDS epidemic that the role of the visual in health education campaigns was re-examined as an important component of the educative process within the context of the Cultural Turn. See: Gilman, *Health and Illness*, pp. 115-172; Cooter and Stein, 'Coming into Focus', pp. 180-209.

developed within a particular postwar health policy context. This context produced the necessary impetus for producing, displaying and disseminating a variety of health education materials. Thus, at the same time as international reports linking diets high in saturated fat and cholesterol with increased risk of heart disease were gaining political purchase, so too were the means by which such information was communicated to the public.[46] From 1973 the Health Education Council became particularly concerned with the proliferation of obesity in Britain, which it recognised as an important risk factor for heart disease.[47] Whilst there were very high mortality rates from lung cancer during this period, the steady increase in coronary heart disease, particularly during the 1960s, ensured that the HEC extended their promotion activities to include the risk factors associated with CHD: 'It is not just an old person's disease. It kills 4 out of every 10 men who die between 45 and 64. For women of the same age it is second only to cancer as the main cause of death. Over the age of 55 it is the main killer for both sexes'.[48]

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[46] The Department of Health was interested in developing a set of moderate dietary guidelines for the public. At the same time the press were assuming responsibility for communicating scientific findings regarding diet and disease risk. In particular, science journalism emerged in the postwar period that mediated and managed the flow of scientific and health related information in the realm of public communication. For example see: Kelly Loughlin, 'Networks of Mass Communication: Reporting Science, Health and Medicine in the 1950s and 1960s', in *Making Health Policy*, ed. by Berridge, pp. 295-322; Kelly Loughlin, '"Your Life in Their Hands": The Context of a Medical-Media Controversy', *Media History* 6:2 (2000), p. 177-188.

[47] TNA, Health Education Council Files, Health Education Council meetings, FP 1/1 (1973).

[48] TNA, Health Education Council Files, Health Education Council discussion paper, FP 1/10/1 (1981). Much of the historical literature has focussed on the development of health education campaigns conveying the smoking and lung cancer risk with lesser attention paid to those campaigns centred on alcoholism, heart disease, accident prevention or food hygiene. This absence is recently being redressed. For example see: Martin Gorsky, Krzysztof Krajewski-Siuda, Wojciech Dutka and Virginia Berridge, 'Anti-Alcohol Posters in Poland, 1945-1989: Diverse Meanings, Uncertain Effects', *American Journal of Public Health: Public Health Then and Now* 100:11 (2010), pp. 2059-2069; Mark Bufton and Virginia Berridge, 'Post-war nutrition science and policy making in Britain c. 1945-1994: the case of diet and heart disease', in *Food, Science, Policy and Regulation in the Twentieth Century: International and Comparative Perspectives*, ed. by David F. Smith and Jim Philips (London and New York: Routledge, 2000), pp. 207-222; Tim Lang, 'Going Public: Food Campaigns during the 1980s and Early 1990s' in *Nutrition in Britain: Science, scientists and politics in the twentieth century*, ed. by David F. Smith (London and New York: Routledge, 1997); Martin Lengwiler, 'Between War Propaganda and Advertising: the visual style of accident prevention as a precursor to postwar health education in Switzerland', in *Medicine, the market and the mass media: Producing Health in the Twentieth Century*, ed. by Virginia Berridge and Kelly Loughlin (London: Abingdon, 2005); Lesley

The expert committee (which united scientists and government in influencing policy) played an influential role in filtering the emergent scientific fact that diet was a contributory factor in heart disease into the area of policy, and by extension health education. The Committee on Medical and Nutritional Aspects of Food Policy (COMA), chaired by the Chief Medical Officer, advised the government on 'medical and scientific aspects of policy in relation to nutrition'.[49] The COMA panel on diet and heart disease was established in 1970 to advise on the 'significance of any relation between nutrition and cerebro-vascular and cardio-vascular disease, and on any indications for future action'.[50] Its report, *Diet and Coronary Heart Disease* represented merely the lowest common factor of agreement by the panel and its results on policy were limited.[51] Yet, the environment in which this committee was operating was decidedly dynamic and rapidly changing.

The emergence of the new lifestyle, risk-focused community health coalesced with an increased interest by consumerist groups in dietary issues.[52] Similarly, medical professionals were increasingly committed to emphasising preventive

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Diack and David F. Smith, 'The Media and the Management of a Food Crisis: Aberdeen's Typhoid Outbreak in 1964', in *Medicine, the market and the mass media,* ed. by Berridge and Loughlin, pp. 79-94.

[49] TNA, Correspondence – 'Mr Sinson', MH 56/442 (1961).

[50] DHSS, *Annual Report of the Chief Medical Officer for 1970* (London: HMSO, 1971), p. 115.

[51] Such was the level of professional disagreement during the first COMA panel on diet and heart disease that John Yudkin, Emeritus Professor of Nutrition and Dietetics at Queen Elizabeth University in London and author of *Pure, White and Deadly: How sugar is killing us and what we can do to stop it*, included a caveat of reservation claiming that the report 'exaggerated the possible role of dietary fat in causing I.H.D and has minimised the role of sucrose'. DHSS, *Diet and Coronary Heart Disease: Report of the Advisory Panel on the Committee on Medical Aspects of Food Policy (Nutrition) on Diet in relation to Cardiovascular and Cerebrovascular Disease* (London: HMSO, 1974).

[52] Bufton and Berridge, 'Post-war nutrition science and policy making in Britain', p. 213. In particular, in 1974 the pressure group 'Technology Assessment Consumerism Centre' achieved widespread publicity in their attack of the nutritional value of the white loaf. For more on the postwar rise of consumer-activist groups see: Matthew Hilton, *Consumerism in Twentieth Century Britain: The Search for a Historical Movement* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 194-218; Hilton, 'Social Activism in the Age of Consumption: The Organised Consumer Movement', *Social History* 32:2 (2007), pp. 121-143.

measures in trying to reduce heart disease.[53] In 1976 the Royal College of Physicians published a report on diet and cardiovascular disease recommending that saturated fat intake be lowered and in the same year the Department of Health and Social Security (DHSS) published the governmental policy document *Prevention and Health: Everybody's Business*, followed in 1978 by *Prevention and Health: Eating for Health*.[54] The National Advisory Committee on Nutrition Education (NACNE), established in 1979, similarly sought to determine pragmatic policy recommendations on diet and heart disease. Their wide-ranging and formidable proposals were met with hostility by the DHSS and its restricted circulation received extensive media attention.[55] Whilst NACNE was still preparing its guidelines, another COMA panel was established to update their 1974 findings. They drew similar conclusions to their NACNE counterparts in 1984 but their findings now led to limited action that centred on the launch of the HEC's national 'Look After Your Heart' health education campaign which was designed to increase awareness of heart disease and how to reduce susceptibility.[56] That a number of diverse evidence-based expert committees

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[53] Of these the Coronary Prevention Group (founded in 1979) and the London Food Group (founded 1984) were the most influential and well-known food policy non-governmental organisations that sought to publicise a variety of food issues. For more see: Lang 'Going Public', pp. 238-260.

[54] Bufton and Berridge, 'Post-war nutrition science and policy making in Britain', p. 211. Similar developments were occurring in the United States. Both *Prevention and Health: Everybody's Business* and *Prevention and Health: Eating for Health* outlined the role individuals needed to play in determining their own health status and emphasised the need for committed behavioural change as a central component of preventive health. The McGovern Committee of the United States Senate published *Dietary Goals for the United States* in 1977, which similarly called for a large reduction in saturated fat intake - particularly those derived from meat and dairy products. In 1981, the Royal College of General Practitioners report *Prevention of Arterial Disease in General Practice* emphasised only smoking and hypertension in drawing attention to risk factors. As a consequence, the DHSS prepared a booklet on CHD in its prevention series. The booklet set out the scientific evidence on risk factors in the context of prevention. See: TNA, Health Education Council Files, Health Education Council discussion paper, FP 1/10/1 (1981).

[55] In particular, Geoffrey Cannon writing in *The Times* was at the forefront of the media condemnation. For more see: Bufton and Berridge, 'Post-war nutrition science and policy making in Britain', pp. 209-221. The DHSS was particularly hesitant about NACNE's recommendations concerning alcohol and salt intake, which it argued was beyond the remit of the Committee itself. Again see: Bufton and Berridge, 'Post-war nutrition science and policy making in Britain', pp. 209-221.

[56] The COMA panel was deemed more acceptable to the DHSS as the evidence against saturated fat fell short of proof and therefore, guidelines could remain tentative in nature. See: Bufton and Berridge, 'Post-war nutrition science and policy making in Britain', p. 215; Bufton and Berridge, 'Post-war

failed, over a decade, to reach even tentative conclusions concerning the link between diet and heart disease revealed the rather complex process in which the roles of individuals, the media and changes in the public health culture interacted in forming health policies. Health education, focused on identifying and altering risk behaviours, therefore represented the least professionally fraught means of incorporating expert advice into health policy by the mid-1980s.[57]

As Virginia Berridge's work on the emergence of a 'new public health' in the postwar period and her analysis of the policy response to the connection between smoking and lung cancer revealed, health education in the 1970s was remodelled in the language and style of advertising, itself highly indebted to the American model of marketing and promotion techniques.[58] As discussed in Chapter Two, the 1960s slowly heralded a greater commitment to a mass media approach to disseminating health information centred on pre-testing through market research.[59] Within this process the HEC was a key agent in realising a centralised and technocratic approach to health education that made greater use of the persuasive tools of the mass media in a cost-effective way.[60] This incorporation of advertising and mass media techniques advanced the role of visual representations within health education. Advertising used images to elicit particular responses on the part of the viewer while it advanced an illusion of interaction with 'real' people as evidence that what was being displayed

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nutrition science and policy making in Britain', p. 215; DHSS, *Annual Report of the Chief Medical Officer of Health for 1988* (London: HMSO, 1989), pp. 49-53.

[57] Bufton and Berridge, 'Post-war nutrition science and policy making in Britain', p. 217.

[58] Berridge, *Marketing Health*, pp. 194-197.

[59] The HEC in particular utilised market-testing techniques through sample surveys and assessments of reception and comprehension of publicity material. See: TNA, Health Education Council Files, Health Education Council discussion paper, FP 1/5 (1977).

[60] Berridge, *Marketing Health*, p 194. This new style of advertising made more sophisticated use of the mass media and was incorporated into HEC campaigns by the advertising agency Saatchi and Saatchi. These new style agencies altered the image of advertising and incorporated the advice and approach of marketing academics to establish a professional, scientific approach to advertising. This involved the combination of humour and hard sell to import contemporary advertising approaches in the commercial world into the public health opposition. See: Alison Fendley, *Saatchi & Saatchi: The Inside Story* (New York: Arcade Publishing, 1995), pp. 35-37; Berridge, *Marketing Health*, pp. 195-196.

did occur, which health education appropriated in order to 'sell' health.[61] It was through a process of representation and self-identification that advertising images produced and manipulated social signifiers that could be utilised to prompt behavioural change on the part of the individual.[62] Thus, health education campaigns were operating a dual agenda. They were created to draw upon scientific and political authority, opting to emphasise clinical and epidemiological research by stressing lifestyle choice. Simultaneously they attempted to convey food and diet advice in a manner that could be perceived as rational - an intuitive way of absorbing health advice in an informative manner – within individual daily contexts.

The move towards detailed advice campaigns therefore reflected an effort to enlist consumers into adopting appropriate health behaviours in addition to a respect for the development of new diet markets and consequently the marketisation of nutrition and health itself. Within this process, images were key. They repeatedly constructed and coded notions of acceptable health behaviour within established modes of representation – notably gender, beauty norms, and the centrality of individualism. Thus, government-sponsored health education campaigns took into account the varying and changing social environment in which they were operating. Health messages were linked to contemporary notions of health and beauty and as so succinctly put by Professor John Halloran of the Centre for Mass Communication Research, '[a] "message" is not dropped into a social vacuum. It enters into an

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[61] Paul Messaris, *Visual Persuasion: The Role of Images in Advertising* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1997), p. vii.

[62] Shroeder and Zwick, 'Mirrors of Masculinity', pp. 21-52; George Rizter, 'Introduction', in *The Consumer Society: Myths and Structures*, ed. by Jean Baudrillard (London: Sage Publications, 1998), pp. 1-24.

existing social network, an established system of norms and values, an ongoing process of interactions and relationships'.[63]

This chapter, through a close 'reading' of both static and moving images of nutrition education material, offers insights into the institutional and social attitudes towards bodies, disease and the promotion of food as a 'modern' medicine. It was within this changed health policy context that health education and community health more generally appropriated visual representations as important components of nutrition and diet advertising. I examine the activities of not only the Health Education Council in reorienting nutrition as a major selling point of their activities, but also highlight the work of the commercial television station ITV in providing ancillary educative content through the television documentary format. In doing so, I recognise that these images represent only a small proportion of the poster and filmic material produced during this timeframe on the subject of nutrition, diet and chronic disease. To include all is beyond the scope of my project and my approach is instead centred on close textual analysis of particular moments in the history of a largely unexamined field of visual culture. By analysing the 'Look After Yourself' campaign, *A Way Of Life* (S. Clarkhall, Central Office of Information, 1976) and ITV's *This Week*'s two-part *Lessons* series (1987), I will reveal some of the ways in which scientific knowledge about diet and disease were entangled with a range of cultural and representational practices so often focussed on tropes of gender, body image and the 'cult' of slimming.[64]

This chapter is therefore divided loosely according to the specific campaign or documentary film under examination. Firstly, I analyse the HEC's 'Look After

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[63] John Halloran, note to HEC from Centre of Mass Communication, 1975. As quoted in Sutherland: *Health Education – Half a Policy*, p. 11.

[64] This approach to image analysis and visual culture has been influenced by Lisa Cartwright's work on the use of cinema in medical science. See: Cartwright, *Screening the Body*, pp. xi-xvii.

Yourself' campaign specifically in relation to prevailing notions of beauty and the body. By doing so, I highlight how this aestheticisation of nutrition and health in the publicity material of the 'Look After Yourself' campaign revealed the intersection between gender, beauty, modernity and consumer culture within 1970s and 1980s community health. I will then assess the Central Office of Information film *A Way of Life*, exposing how 'the power to move bodies across the screen' to shape national public health outcomes relied on the ability to drive an individual internalisation of disease risk.[65] While continuing the themes of beauty ideals, this section explores how the internalised gaze, which operated on the body through motion, literally 'move[d]' nutrition and health into the public imagination.

The final section of this chapter investigates the role of commercial television in visualising these very same health risks. As an informative model of depicting, publicising and selling nutrition that combined investigative journalism with traditional forms of public health education, I assess how documentary narratives allocated responsibility for disease and health within a commercialised context. By focussing on the *This Week* two-part programme, *Lessons from the Dead* and *Lessons for the Living*, I draw interesting parallels between this form of health education and the more traditional public health poster and booklet. Therefore a main concern of this chapter (and my thesis as a whole) is decoding what visual representations of diet and disease – whether static or moving – say about bodies, health and the role of food in the disease prevention process. Similarly, I want to understand how such images represented 'ideal' health statuses which reveal unique and important evidence about how community health and health education were developing a disease prevention agenda.

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[65] Cartwright, *Screening the Body*, pp.

The Aestheticisation of Nutrition and Health: 'Look After Yourself' and the Construction of the 'Beautiful' Body

A number of historians of visual culture and medicine have analysed depictions of disease (and the diseased) in relation to the dichotomous relationship between the 'beautiful' and the 'ugly' body as an aesthetic norm.[66] By constructing illness in such a way, they argued that visual representations of disease allowed viewers to distance themselves from the perceived source of pollution and taboo.[67] While most historical research has been conducted in relation to either depictions of insanity during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries or bodily representations of AIDS during the 1980s and early 1990s, similar visual tropes of disease were constructed for chronic conditions.[68] These same tropes, such as gender, bodily beauty and concepts of 'risk', engaged with notions of the diseased body in perhaps more complex and nuanced ways. The mid-to-late twentieth century witnessed a distinct shift in how the body was depicted for public health purposes. While eighteenth and nineteenth century representations of madness had repeatedly portrayed the diseased as not only a health

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[66] At the forefront of this approach has been Sander Gilman's work on representing disease through images. Peter Burke in *Eyewitnessing* has similarly outlined this approach to image analysis with specific reference to the history of medicine. Burke, *Eyewitnessing*, pp. 9-20.

[67] Gilman, *Health and Illness*, pp. 51-66, 115-172; Sander Gilman, *Disease and Representation: Images of Illness from Madness to AIDS* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988), pp. 1-17; Gilman, *Making the Body Beautiful: A Cultural History of Aesthetic Surgery* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 1999), p. 49-51.

[68] Gilman, *Seeing the Insane* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1995); Gilman, Health and Illness, pp. 51-66, 115-172; Allan Ingram and Michelle Faubert, *Cultural Constructions of Madness in Eighteenth-Century Writing: Representing the Insane* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), pp. 170-201; Brandt, *No Magic Bullet*, pp. 183-204. Despite her position that posters could only be constructed as adjuncts to the purpose of manipulating the body to political ends, in both *Illness as Metaphor* and *AIDS and its Metaphors*, Sontag examines how metaphors are constructed to mythologize disease and therefore manage societal fear. See: Susan Sontag, *Illness as Metaphor and AIDS and its Metaphors* (London: Penguin Classics, 2002). Cooter and Stein, 'Coming into Focus', pp. 187-190, examines Sontag's work in reference to the intellectual reorientation of the public health poster as initiated by the AIDS epidemic of the 1980s. Morality and disease have been recurring themse within visual representations of insanity and AIDS in particular. Perceived sexual deviance – masturbation and homosexuality as respective examples – have complicated the depiction of illness and have similarly allowed the emergence of the ugly and the beautiful as benchmarks for the unhealthy and the healthy body. See: Frank Mort, *Dangerous Sexualities: Medico-moral Politics in England since 1830* (London: Routledge, 2000). 119-162; Paula Treichler, *How to Have Theory in an Epidemic: Cultural Chronicles of AIDS* (Durham NC: Duke University Press, 1999), pp. 235-277.

problem but also an aesthetic problem (with the images themselves a means of dealing with the anxieties associated with mental illness), postwar health images employed a distinct representational mode based on a new image of the body, itself enshrined in the concept of 'body image'.[69]

Cooter and Stein posited that the nature of power in society, particularly in relation to the human body, goes some way to explaining the re-emergence of the public health poster as an educative tool during the 1980s and 1990s.[70] They suggested that this move was inextricably linked to the 'age of AIDS'.[71] However, my work reveals that this process may not be so clear-cut. Chronic diseases such as heart disease, with its multi-causal aetiology, had already established everyone as potentially 'at risk'. This altered the ways in which the diseased body was represented within public health posters more generally. If, as Cooter and Stein contended, visuality itself did not come into intellectual focus until the 'age of AIDS', I argue that this intellectualisation is a reflection of the continuing reliance on the public health poster as a representational tool (which may have been accelerated by the AIDS epidemic but was certainly not wholly responsible for it). As the 'Look After Yourself' campaign showed, health posters continued to be centrepieces of governmental campaigning initiatives, even if they received comparatively less central funding, dedicated advertising expertise and airtime than the AIDS campaigning would subsequently achieve (a trend perhaps accelerated by the scientific and causal uncertainty attributed to the latter).[72] Therefore, I seek to re-orientate this re-emergence of the body 'at risk' – the pathological body as no longer isolated from the 'normal' – from discussions centred on the AIDS epidemic and

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[69] I am summarising here the work of Gilman, *Health and Illness*, pp. 33-50 and pp. 115-172 and ideas advanced by Brumberg in *The Body Project*, pp. 97-137.
[70] Cooter and Stein, 'Coming into Focus', pp. 180-209.
[71] Cooter and Stein, 'Coming into Focus', p. 181.
[72] In particular, I am referring to the AIDS campaign 'AIDS: Don't Die of Ignorance', 1986-1987.

instead establish it as a visual trope that emerged within the postwar British public health tradition and in the arena of chronicity (particularly smoking, heart disease and diabetes) specifically during the 1970s and 1980s.[73]

As products of a sophisticated advertising culture, these public health posters documented the state-sponsored representation of the healthy body during this period. By appropriating the body as a key site for disseminating heart disease risk within health education materials, the visual centrepieces of public health campaigns utilised gender, contemporary notions of physical attractiveness and the ideology of low-fat diets as advertising tools. Thus, embedded within public health educational materials pertaining to heart disease were social attitudes towards men and women in addition to gendered conceptions of risk and responsibility.[74] As Leslie J. Reagan has described with reference to popular cancer texts and periodicals within a US context, gender has been consistently used as a 'primary device for attracting attention and conveying information. Through these materials, people have learned not only about cancer but [also] about gender norms'.[75] Similar processes that utilised gender as an educative tool were equally at work within British health education during the 1970s and 1980s. The 'Look After Yourself' campaign, in a variety of its printed material, emphasised female and male bodies, often with reference to notions of bodily attractiveness. I will demonstrate that by engendering health in such ways, this better

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[73] See Gilman, *Health and Illness,* pp. 115-172; Berridge, *Marketing Health*, pp. 185-207. For similar developments in the US see: Brandt, 'The Cigarette, Risk and American Culture', *Daedalus* 119:4 (1990), pp. 155-176; Brandt, *The Cigarette Century: The Rise, Fall and Deadly Persistence of the Product that Defined America*, pp. 221-231; David Cantor, 'Uncertain Enthusiasm: The American Cancer Society, Public Education and the Problem of the Movie, 1921-1960', *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 81:1 (2007), pp. 39-69;

[74] Leslie J. Reagan has conducted similar research on gender as an organising principle in cancer discourse as disseminated in popular periodical literature in the United States. See: Leslie J. Reagan, 'Engendering the Dread Disease: Women, Men and Cancer', *American Journal of Public Health* 87 (1997), pp. 1779-1787.

[75] Reagan, 'Engendering the Dread Disease', p. 1779.

health campaign appropriated particular healthy attitudes and approaches to eating and the body.

Figure 3.15: 'Is your body coming between you and the opposite sex? Poster, HEC: 'Look After Yourself' Campaign, (Science & Society Picture Library, 10411400), 1978-1980.

One such poster posited 'Is your body coming between you and the opposite sex?' (Fig. 3.2) By asking this question, this 'Look After Yourself' campaign poster reinforced the primacy of the 'beautiful' rather than the 'ugly' body as an aesthetic norm in the representation of not only healthiness and fitness, but personal attractiveness to potential suitors too.[76] It depicted an overweight man, in swimming trunks, standing by the side of a pool looking at a group of women in the middle ground, swimming and playing with a ball. The placement of the women within the pool visually suggested movement and dynamism – they were grouped into small configurations, with each person engaged in some type of physical exchange, throwing the ball, blocking or preparing to catch. The central figure was turned away from the viewer, his body in profile, emphasising his rotund form, while also guiding the viewer to the pool scene in the middle ground. By doing so the man was both within and without the scene. His foreground positioning served to visually, as well as metaphorically, remove him from the 'action' of the setting. In doing so the poster suggested the existence of a barrier between healthy and unhealthy individuals, whether they are male or female, in their ability to participate in a 'modern' active life. This removal of the overweight male from the other central components of the visual field thus served to underscore that his weight was not just coming between him and the opposite sex, but society more generally. In juxtaposing the slim, swim-suited female bodies in the middle ground with the larger, overweight male figure in the foreground, the need to '*look* better and feel fitter' was framed as an aspiration for all and a reality for some.[77] Indeed, the man is himself looking at the women, creating a male-centred gaze that constructed the women as 'beautiful' – active and healthy – in comparison to the overweight man.

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[76] This poster was amongst the first poster art to be produced for the 'Look After Yourself' campaign in 1978. The main object of the campaign itself was to encourage members of the public to adopt healthier living habits, and in its first phase focussed largely on diet, exercise and the effects of smoking on health. In its second phase there was a slight shift of emphasis from exercise to diet. Figure 3.1 (used as an introductory tool to this chapter was produced as part of the second phase and Figure 3.2 (above) was from the initial campaigning period. 'Look After Yourself' (Health Campaign), *House of Commons Debate*. 11 July 1978: col 477 and later merged with the 'Look After Your Heart' campaign in 1984.

[77] [Italics added by this author].

In doing so, the poster visually and textually elevated the importance of 'look' and 'looking' within contemporary society. Certainly, appearance was prioritised over dedicated commitment to either visually or textually conveying disease risk in real terms. The poster made no reference to those specific diseases that were affected by diet and exercise. Although Health Education Council minutes revealed the campaign's inherent commitment to reducing mortality rates from heart disease in particular, they also exposed a tentative approach to visually delineating disease in a frank and open manner.[78] This tendency towards omitting any reference to specific health risks, especially in terms of mortality, death or dying was reflected in other visual material produced for the 'Look After Yourself' campaign. The 'Do you hold your breath when a man looks at you?' poster (Figure 3.1), which opened this Chapter, similarly avoided explicit reference to disease, instead fulfilling the campaign's aims to 'emphasis[e] ... the benefits of good health not the disadvantages of habits such as smoking conducive to ill health'.[79] This absence of the diseased body, while still acknowledging the body 'at risk', marked a distinct break from the previous cultural expressions of disease typified by eighteenth and nineteenth century representations of madness and syphilis. These former portrayals contended that the ill body was visually marked as ugly, for both 'ugly' and 'diseased' were identical and interchangeable categories.[80] The 'Look After Yourself' posters (Figure 3.1 and Figure 3.2) instead revealed that notions of 'ugly' versus 'beautiful' were aligned with 'disease' and 'health' in new, risk-centred ways. The 'ugly' body was no longer the 'diseased' body but the body at risk; the body engaged in behaviours detrimental to health, themselves inscribed on the body largely through weight gain.

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[78] TNA, Health Education Council Files, Health Education Council discussion paper, FP5/1 (1977).
[79] TNA, Health Education Council Files, Health Education Council discussion paper, FP 5/1 (1977).
[80] Gilman, *Health and Illness*, pp. 33-66.

That the characters in the middle ground of the image were women did not destabilise the notion that un-healthiness in relation to diet and exercise choices had wider implications on how people, regardless of gender, were viewed and accepted in society. The central male character looked down enviously on the scene below yet none of the cavorting figures in the pool acknowledged his presence. I would suggest that the use of a black and white colour scheme reinforced the idea that obesity, with its clear associations with a number of chronic diseases, did not correspond with a 'modern', postwar nation.[81] As explained in Chapter Two, colour was an important visual symbol in the postwar years, marking a distinct move away from wartime austerity. Therefore, colour as a metaphor and the idea that its use (or absence) lends itself to symbolism has been a major area of discussion in the realm of art and art history.[82] Within this field, there have been broad discussions about what it is that particular colours denote metaphorically.[83] While within the context of fine art, black has come to signify death or dying and white innocence and purity, these colour meanings are complicated by the photograph.

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[81] Of course, it may well be that there was also a financial motivation for the use of a black and white photograph as the central component of this poster. Certainly, black and white printing incurred less costs than their colour counterparts. Yet at no point in the correspondence of the HEC or in their minutes are financial reasons cited as a motivating factor in attributing reduced funds to any aspect of this campaign. Indeed, as campaign surveys assessed the apparent success of the first phase of the campaign, the sum appropriated to the campaign from central funds increased dramatically. See: TNA, FP 1/7, 'Health Education Council Files, Health Education Council Minutes', 1979. It is worth noting that much archive material produced by the HEC and later the HEA were inherited by NICE and as of yet have not found a permanent home to allow researcher access. Because of this, I have been largely dependent on the minute and meeting records of both the HEC and HEA, which tend to be brief and succinct, rarely detailing the motivations behind their decisions beyond that of wider health policy. See also: Kelly Loughlin and Virginia Berridge, 'Whatever Happened to Health Education?: Mapping the Grey Literature Collection Inherited by NICE', *Social History of Medicine* 21:3 (2008), pp. 561-572.

[82] See John Gage, *Colour in Art* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2006), pp. 147-163; John Gage, *Colour and Meaning: Art, Science and Symbolism* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1999), pp. 52-66; Patricia Sloane has argued that colour-names and associations are redundant and an obstacle to visual experience, yet are hallowed due to centuries of use and expression. See Patricia Sloane, *The Visual Nature of Color* (New York: Design Press, 1989), pp. 262-272. This position was strongly influenced by the modernist tradition in fine art.

[83] This is briefly discussed in Gage, *Colour in Art*, pp. 146-163.

Photography has long been heralded as one of the visual technologies that helped to usher in the age of modernity through its bold combination of scientific technique and art.[84] Its initial black and white format thus typified the modern uses of power and surveillance in society.[85] As this was replaced by the application of colour processes at the time of exposure, colour photography itself superseded its predecessor as a technology that spoke of modernity. Consequently, the use of black and white processing in this poster is a visual technique that referenced a representational style, perhaps by the 1970s considered to be passé, quaint and the antithesis of modern[86]. By aligning monochrome photography with the anti-modern, this poster can be read as an attack on its own visual content. This was expressed through the centrality of the overweight male figure in this photographic piece. By constructing his pose – turned away from the viewer – away from the tenets of modern society, itself preoccupied with notions of beauty and slimness – the photograph visually established the roles of the less central female characters as aspirational for 1970s and 1980s British society. Many of their dynamic poses looked beyond the frame towards the viewer, aligning their bodily shapes and active engagement with these self same tenets of postwar modernity. Therefore, the utilisation of both colour (in Figure 3.1) and the black and white photograph (Figure 3.2) in these posters acted to associate obesity and unhealthy personal behaviours with out-dated modes of behaviour. The previous war and immediate postwar reliance on increasing food intake, and the primacy of 'body-building' foods such as meat, cheese and eggs were no longer relevant or healthful within the later postwar context of

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[84] Sturken and Cartwright, *Practices of Looking*, p. 117.

[85] For a summary of these uses of the photograph see: Sturken and Cartwright, *Practices of Looking*, pp. 94-100; Susan Sontag, *On Photography* (London: Penguin, 2002), pp. 153-183; John Berger, 'Understanding a Photograph' in *Classic Essays on Photography*, ed. by Alan Trachtenberg (New Haven: Leetes's Island Books, 1980), pp. 291-292.

[86] Of course, this overtly visual reading of colour, or lack thereof in this poster, elevates the aesthetic over ancillary motives for producing a black and white photograph, particularly that of cost.

abundant food supplies.[87] Now, food prudence, careful food choices and increased exercise were the markers of modernity within society – after all 'a bit less food and a bit more exercise will make you look better and feel fitter'.

Yet the use of the photograph had a dual function. By visually establishing the body as the site upon which notions of beauty, health and bodily norms were constructed within health education, the 'Look After Yourself' campaign contributed to a particular aestheticisation of nutrition, exercise and health. Rather than portraying the body in an idealised or artistic manner, this aestheticisation relied on depicting the body in credible ways through a reliance on photographic images as central visual components.[88] Both Figure 3.1 and Figure 3.2 used photographs as their key constituents. However, Figure 3.1 utilised the photograph in a 'before and after' arrangement to visually imply the effects that controlled diet and increased exercise might have on the female form. While it can be argued that this particular example of the 'after' conveyed nothing more than improved posture and stomach muscle tension (implying that these photographs were taken mere minutes apart), the visual message implied a more meaningful change. This message was established not through a reading of the visual alone, but through its textual components too. The poster proclaimed that 'Tucking in your tummy isn't the answer' and by doing so called into question its own visual constituencies. This ambiguity between the visual and textual components suggested that while this tummy tuck approach to achieving the beautiful/healthy body was not a long-term solution, it intimated that the same body shape was attainable by 'eat[ing] more low calorie foods like wholemeal bread, fresh

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[87] For a brief discussion on the development of the Food Chart during the Second World War and the early stages of food groups in Britain see Chapter One.

[88] In general terms 'to aestheticise' is 'to depict in an idealised or artistic manner'. Yet I would suggest that realism in artistry can be just as aesthetically pertinent for the purposes of visual analysis.

fruit and vegetables'.[89] Therefore the aestheticisation of food and exercise was achieved as an attainable and relatable bodily (and by extension healthy) principle.

By relying on photographs to convey the central message of these posters, the HEC itself was subscribing to the notion that, as Jordanova has delineated, by looking at photographs 'we are prone to see through the representation to an original scene, and to engage with that scene as if it were immediately before us'.[90] In general terms, it is their very constructed nature, their controlled countenance that rendered photographs particularly difficult to analyse as pieces of historical evidence. Yet within the constructed confines of a health education campaign issues of integrity were removed, as such photographs were in and of themselves composed, designed and staged not as possible 'windows' onto the world but as highly stylised representations. These representations took advantage of the cultural position of the photograph as central elements within contemporary consumer culture, in particular advertising, in order to similarly 'sell' ideas of health in conjunction with 'beautiful', sought-after bodies. Rather than operating as documentary photography, therefore, the images that filled these 'Look After Yourself' posters illustrated the desire to use photographs that imitated the 'real' as tools for information provision that might inspire behavioural change on the part of the viewer. While this photographic approach was particularly pertinent in the poster material for the 'Look After Yourself' campaign, much of the accompanying pamphlet and booklet material adopted a variety of visual forms including comic strips, minimalist diagrams and

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[89] The accompanying text goes on to suggest that 'Even potatoes' are a good source of low calorie nutrition. This raises questions about the perception of potatoes within the contemporaneous dieting culture. As a carbohydrate the potato has often been victimised as contributing to the prevalence of empty kilocalories from high-energy foods, low in nutritional value in the national diet. Yet, as complex carbohydrates, potatoes are important sources of dietary fibre, vitamin C and slow-release energy.

[90] Ludmilla Jordanova, *The Look of the Past: Visual and Material Evidence in Historical Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), p. 130.

illustrations to visually espouse particular health behaviours. Therefore, while many of the images produced for this particular campaign employed differing and contrasting stylistic traits, together they utilised the body at risk as a means to advertise and promote food and exercise as a modern medicine.

In the booklet ‘Look After Yourself: A simple guide to exercise & diet’ (Figure 3.3), the human body was reduced to a series of black and white minimalist diagrams aimed at showing clearly the body in motion and to visually explain, step-by-step the exact exercise positions that were recommended for all members of the population.[91]

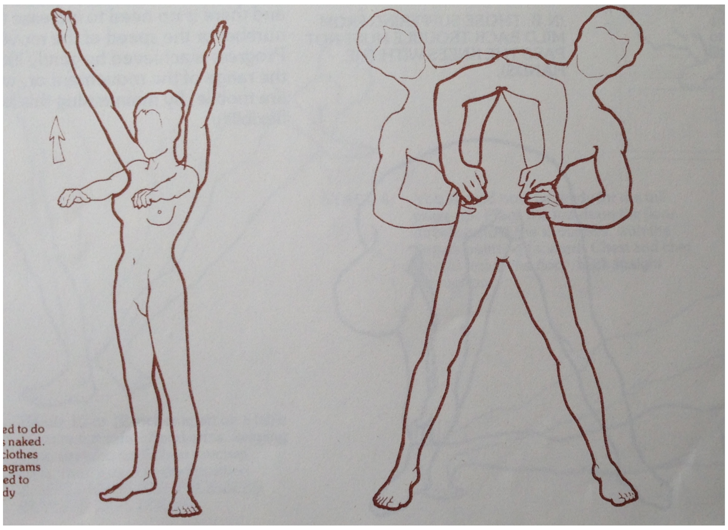

Figure 16.3: ‘The Active Way to Better Health’, HEC: ‘Look After Yourself’ Booklet (researcher owns this booklet), c. 1978.

These sketches outlined the body in motion while isolating the lithe, nude and deconstructed human figure as a natural bodily composition that was engaged in physical activity. This series of sketches avoided any depiction of the overweight body or the body at ‘risk’ that pervaded much of the health imagery in this campaign as a whole. Rather, by deconstructing the body into elements of movement, the

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[91] This booklet was based on the BBC television series *The Health Show* and was edited for publication by Ron Bloomfield of the BBC and Freddie Lawrence of the Health Education Council.

booklet utilised a more conceptual and graphic rendering of the body, seemingly at a remove from both culturally contingent notions of personal attractiveness to the opposite sex and the recurrent poster emphasis on diet and slimming.[92]

The booklet was divided into sections – 'mobility exercises'; 'strength exercises'; 'heart and lung exercises'; and 'exercises for an advanced schedule' – under the general title of 'The Active Way to Better Health'. Each section was accompanied by a selection of pictures that attempted to show these exercises through clear, step-by-step instructions. By depicting the body in motion through these arranged shapes, the Health Education Council was advocating a form of health behaviour centred on the fit, active body, which by its inherent taut form was considered beautiful. Consequently, these images were reminiscent of a series of photographs by Edward Muybridge from 1887 (whose work was important in pioneering motion-picture imagery and its interest in the moving body), which similarly captured the nude body in motion as a sign of technological and social modernity.[93] In these 'Look After Yourself' images, both male and female bodies were portrayed as the epitome of bodily form – healthy and thus 'modern'. Yet despite their apparent illustrative starkness, they still served to reinforce gender normative models of exercise. For instance, in the sub-section focused on the four stages of progressive press-ups, each of the accompanying diagrams depicted a male figure (Figure 3.4). Indeed, this gendering was textually reinforced, with the accompanying explanation to Stage 2 warning that 'Ladies need not progress beyond this stage'.

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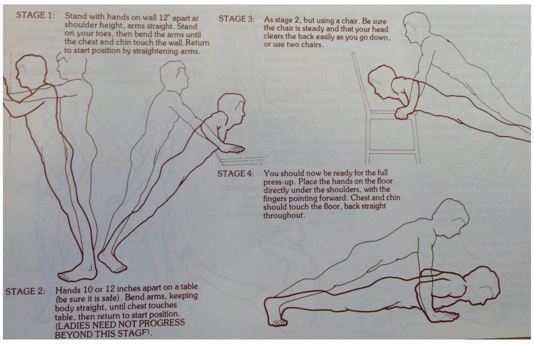
[92] By I am using the word 'graphic' in terms of a visual diagrammatic rather than concerns with the explicit.

[93] For a brief discussion on the early development of motion-picture projection and the associated interest in depicting the nude body in motion see: David Thomson, *Moments that Made the Movies* (London: Thames & Hudson 2013), pp. 13-15; also Anthony R. Guneratne, 'The birth of a new realism: Photography, painting and the advent of documentary cinema', *Film History* 10:2 (1998), pp. 165-187.

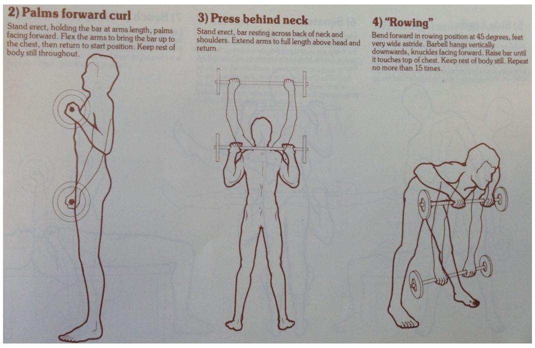


STAGE 1: Stand with hands on wall 12″ apart at shoulder height, arms straight. Stand on your toes, then bend the arms until the chest and chin touch the wall. Return to start position by straightening arms.

STAGE 2: Hands 10 or 12 inches apart on a table (be sure it is safe). Bend arms, keeping body straight, until chest touches table, then return to start position. (LADIES NEED NOT PROGRESS BEYOND THIS STAGE).

STAGE 3: As stage 2, but using a chair. Be sure the chair is steady and that your head clears the back easily as you go down, or use two chairs.

STAGE 4: You should now be ready for the full press-up. Place the hands on the floor directly under the shoulders, with the fingers pointing forward. Chest and chin should touch the floor, back straight throughout.



2) Palms forward curl

Stand erect, holding the bar at arms length, palms facing forward. Flex the arms to bring the bar up to the chest, then return to start position. Keep rest of body still throughout.

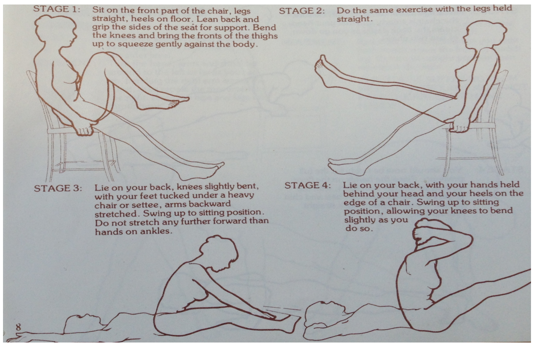
3) Press behind neck

Stand erect, bar resting across back of neck and shoulders. Extend arms to full length above head and return.

4) "Rowing"

Bend forward in rowing position at 45 degrees, feet very wide astride. Barbell hangs vertically downwards, knuckles facing forward. Raise bar until it touches top of chest. Keep rest of body still. Repeat no more than 15 times.

(L-R) Figure 3.17: 'The Active Way to Better Health' Booklet, c. 1978.
Figure 3.5: 'The Active Way to Better Health' Booklet, c. 1978.



STAGE 1: Sit on the front part of the chair, legs straight, heels on floor. Lean back and grip the sides of the seat for support. Bend the knees and bring the fronts of the thighs up to squeeze gently against the body.

STAGE 2: Do the same exercise with the legs held straight.

STAGE 3: Lie on your back, knees slightly bent, with your feet tucked under a heavy chair or settee, arms backward stretched. Swing up to sitting position. Do not stretch any further forward than hands on ankles.

STAGE 4: Lie on your back, with your hands held behind your head and your heels on the edge of a chair. Swing up to sitting position, allowing your knees to bend slightly as you do so.

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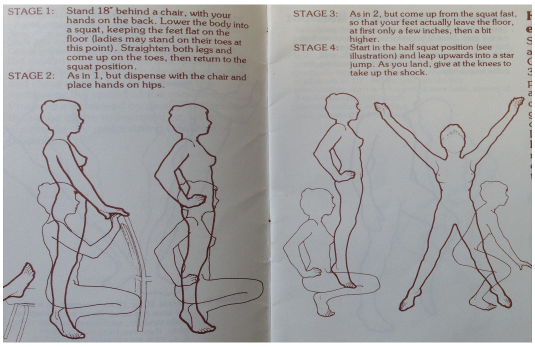

STAGE 1: Stand 18″ behind a chair, with your hands on the back. Lower the body into a squat, keeping the feet flat on the floor (ladies may stand on their toes at this point). Straighten both legs and come up on the toes, then return to the squat position.

STAGE 2: As in 1, but dispense with the chair and place hands on hips.

STAGE 3: As in 2, but come up from the squat fast, so that your feet actually leave the floor, at first only a few inches, then a bit higher.

STAGE 4: Start in the half squat position (see illustration) and leap upwards into a star jump. As you land, give at the knees to take up the shock.

(L-R) Figure 3.6: 'The Active Way to Better Health' Booklet, c. 1978.
Figure 3.7: 'The Active Way to Better Health' Booklet, c. 1978.

No clarification was given as to why 'Ladies' should not progress to Stages 3 and 4 but we can assume it represented a gendered perspective on what constituted 'appropriate' exercise for women within 1970s British culture. While not outlined explicitly, all examples of exercises centred on weights training were similarly visually expressed as male-orientated (Figure 3.5). Conversely, abdominal and leg exercises were depicted as activities more suited to women and were correspondingly illustrated by the nude female figure (Figure 3.6 and 3.7).

The booklet was clearly reinforcing gender norms concerning exercise and physical activity. Expressly, female exercises were shown to be sit-ups and leg squats and the accompanying text pronounced that 'these exercises will flatten your tummy muscles'. Much contemporaneous female magazine and periodical literature similarly supported the notion that a flat stomach and toned legs were the height of bodily management for women.[94] Therefore in ways not divergent from the poster element of the 'Look After Yourself' campaign, this booklet was once again utilising gender and the supposed physical difference between men and women to expound particular healthy lifestyles, whether covertly masculine or covertly feminine, through the visualisation of these gendered exercises.

By clearly advocating the need to 'look better', both posters (Figure 3.1 and Figure 3.2) and booklet diagrams (Figures 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6 and 3.7) participated in the visual and psychological quest for bodily beauty.[95] This contrasted with previous visual representations of madness and subsequent depictions of AIDS, which allowed a distance concerning the healthy and the unhealthy to be represented and underscored between the observer and the subject of the image. This approach was more nuanced in the case of chronic disease.[96] In order to instigate behavioural change, the 'new public health' of the postwar period relied on an internalisation of risk. I have demonstrated that visual representations of the body sought to bridge this distance between the healthy and the unhealthy in order to frame the majority population as at risk and therefore responsible citizens, active in their own health outcomes. Thus, the meaning of these images was constructed not within their visual

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[94] See: Anna Gough Yates, *Understanding Women's Magazines: Publishing, Markets and Readerships* (London: Routledge, 2003); Brett Silverstein, Lauren Perdue, Barbara Peterson and Eileen Kelly, 'The role of the mass media in promoting a thin standard of bodily attractiveness for women', *Sex Roles* 14:9-10 (1986), pp. 519-532. Avner Offer has outlined how women's bust-to-waist ratios of models in photographs published in women's magazines have suffered a dramatic decline between the mid-1960s the 1980s. See: Offer, 'Body Weight and Self Control', p. 81.

[95] For a delineation in the development of beauty as an unstated perceptual norm in medical practice (and especially in relation to mathematical and geometrical perfection) see: Barbara M. Strafford, John La Puma and David F. Schiedermayer, 'One Face of Beauty, One Picture of Health: The Hidden Aesthetic of Medical Practice', *The Journal of Medicine and Philosophy* 14 (1989), pp. 213-230.

[96] This argument concerning the 'ugly' and the 'beautiful' is deeply indebted to the work of Sander Gilman, in particular these two chapters: 'The Ugly and the Beautiful: Cross-Cultural Norms and Definitions of the Medical Culture of Sexuality' and 'The Beautiful Body and AIDS' in *Health and Illness: Images of Difference*, ed. by Sander Gilman (London: Reaktion Books, 1985), pp. 51-66, 115-172.

elements alone, but in how they were consumed, viewed and interpreted.[97] The cultural context in which the health poster was produced, distributed and interpreted was key to understanding its explicit and implicit visual meanings. No one visual approach to the body – whether coded as beautiful or ugly – endured during the postwar period. Rather, each disease, each infection and each epidemic required an individualised visual response. Thus, the utilisation of the body and contemporaneous ideas about body image as a site for disseminating health information concerning diet and disease formed the discrete basis of the 'Look After Yourself' campaign for promoting particular health and eating behaviours. Every image adopted a particular, unique visual style befitting the aims and requirements of a large, mass media, national health campaign.

Individualism, Medical Authority and the Internalised Gaze: *A Way of Life* and the Health Education Film Reconsidered

As stated earlier, Laura Mulvey theorised that the pleasure in 'looking' created a 'male gaze' preoccupied with notions of the female body's '*to-be-looked-at-ness*' and which I suggest can be internalised for the purposes of health behaviour change.[98] Similarly, historians of film and visual culture have argued the importance of motion pictures in producing certain ways of seeing in the twentieth century.[99] In particular, Gillian Rose asserted that the visual is 'bound into social relations' that operated to produce particular types of images and corresponding modes of viewing.[100]

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[97] Marita Sturken and Lisa Cartwright, *Practices of Looking: An Introduction to Visual Culture* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 25.
[98] Mulvey, 'Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema', p. 19.
[99] See: Tim Boon, *Films of Fact: A History of Science in Documentary Films and Television* (London, Wallflower Press, 2008); Patrick Russell and James Piers Taylor, *Shadows of Progress: Documentary Film in Post-War Britain* (London: British Film Institute, 2010); Lisa Cartwright, *Screening the Body: Tracing Medicine's Visual Culture* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997).
[100] Gillian Rose, *Visual Methodologies* (London: SAGE, 2001), pp. 9-15.

Therefore, in similar ways – by operating through visual media – health education produced a particular form of knowledge about life, bodies and disease. As Ludmilla Jordanova affirmed, medical and scientific (and by extension, I would argue, health education) images helped to create scientific knowledge through its dissemination in society.[101] Similarly, Lisa Cartwright extended the use of visual sources to interrogate how technologies (such as cinema) construct images of 'life'.[102] She argued that physiological understandings of bodily processes were influenced by the development of cinematography – which can show bodies (and parts of bodies) in motion.[103] Thus, this technology was linked to ideas of medical authority over 'life' and understandings of 'the body, gender, and cultural identity'.[104]

While Cartwright's analysis focused on cinema created for the purpose of scientific research, Tim Boon has examined the 'alliance' between scientists and filmmakers, who together produced films that portrayed specific aspects of science, medicine and health for the public.[105] Such films utilised particular genre conventions and 'modes of address' to construct 'particular relationships … between the authority they represented and their audiences'.[106] As a result, the content and format of public health and education documentary films established a precedent for conveying medical knowledge and authority while concurrently encouraging individuals to play important roles in maintaining their own good health.[107] Therefore, I argue that the power to move bodies across the screen relied on the ability to forward an individual internalisation of disease risk to the watching public. This mutual dependence on

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[101] Ludmilla Jordanova*, Sexual Visions: Images of Gender in Science and Medicine between the Eighteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1989), pp. 6-7.
[102] Cartwright, *Screening the Body*, pp. xi-xv.
[103] Cartwright, *Screening the Body*, pp. xii-xiii.
[104] Cartwright, *Screening the Body*, p. xvi.
[105] Boon, *Films of Fact*, pp.ix-x.
[106] Tim Boon, 'Health Education Films in Britain, 1919-1939: Production, Genres and Audience' in *Signs of Life: Cinema and Medicine*, ed. by Graeme Harper and Andrew Moor (London: Wallflower Press, 2005), p. 54.
[107] Boon, 'Health Education Films in Britain', p. 54.

‘looking’ and internalising ensured that the motion picture was a crucial instrument in ‘the emergence of a distinctly modernist mode of representation in … scientific and public culture’.[108]

By exploring how an internalised gaze on the body through motion ‘moves’ nutrition and health into the public arena within the context of the public health film, I seek to examine how the rise of individualism in relation to disease risk and the oblique propagation of medical authority operated within the confines of government sponsorship.[109] While a convention for displaying some form of medical authority preceded risk-centred, epidemiologically focussed postwar health education models, this nexus of power was largely focused on the general case.[110] Within the postwar context of health documentaries, individualism was key to disseminating risk. It was how the individual-as-representative could be used to initiate health behaviours. This emphasis on the discrete example of particular health issues reflected and extended the focus in contemporary health education on individualised risk factors and lifestyle choice as key determinants in the development of disease during the postwar period. As chronic disease was receiving ever-more attention on the part of government and health educators alike, the need to convey the importance of lifestyle change (particularly in relation to diet and exercise) increased.

Thus, the ‘Look After Yourself’ campaign was not alone in conceptualising chronic disease in terms of individualism and risk during the 1970s. The documentary

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[108] Cartwright, *Screening the Body*, p. xi.

[109] I am referring here to public health films directly financed by central government, government departments or state-funded non-governmental bodies (such as the HEC) as opposed to public health films produced and funded by, for example, the privately funded British Documentary Film Movement. For more on the latter see: Boon, *Films of Fact*, pp. 33-150; Russell and Piers Taylor, *Shadows of Progress*, pp. 3-19; Ian Aitken, ‘John Grierson and the Documentary Film Movement’ in *The Documentary Film Book*, ed. by Brian Winston (London: British Film Institute, 2013), pp. 129-137.

[110] For example public health films such as *Enough to Eat* (1936) and *Health for the Nation* (1939) examined the overall health of the working class, rather than its individual manifestations. See: Boon, *Films of Fact*, pp. 79-80, pp. 104-107, pp. 109-110, and pp. 235-236; Tim Boon, ‘Science, Society and Documentary’, in *The Documentary Film Book*, ed. by Brian Winston (London, British Film Institute, 2013), p. 323.

film was another mode of communication utilised by government to convey disease risk. Despite the traditional narrative of a postwar 'collapse' in the British documentary film movement, documentary film's role as a declining communicative media in the extra-cinematic (and extra-scientific) sense did not diminish its function as a visual tool of health persuasion and as an important artefact in the history of media culture in postwar Britain.[111] In order to 'read' film as an important visualisation process for disease and health, I apply mise-en-scène criticism and close textual-analysis, thereby adopting a methodological approach borrowed from film studies.[112] By doing so, I suggest that the visual representations that structure the postwar health education film reveal important ideas, arguments and understandings of society that in turn disclose how a gaze was operating through the body as it moved across the screen. Moreover, such films reveal, if not a discernible clinical gaze, then an internalised one – a gaze which firmly places health responsibility and the onus for change on the individual.

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[111] For more on documentary filmmaking during the Second World War see: Boon, *Films of Fact*; Boon, 'Health Education Films'; Boon, 'Agreement and Disagreement in the Making of *World of Plenty*', in *Nutrition in Britain: Science, Scientists and Politics in the Twentieth Century*, ed. by David F. Smith (London: Routledge, 1997), pp. 142-165; Scott Anthony and James G. Mansell. *The Projection of Britain: A History of the GPO Film Unit* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan [for the BFI], 2011); Alan J. Harding, 'The Closure of the Crown Film Unit in 1952: Artistic Decline or Political Machinations?', *Contemporary British History* 18:4 (2007), pp. 22-51; Paul Swann, *The British documentary film movement , 1926-1946* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989). This narrative of 'collapse' stems from its apparent decline in the immediate postwar years, due in part to a serious cut in funding from the cash-strapped Attlee government, especially as television ownership and viewership surpassed projection cinema during the late 1950s. Many scholars of the British Documentary Movement have provided a specific chronological frame for their discussion, with the 'fall' generally identified as occurring in the late 1940s. See: Elizabeth Sussex, *The Rise and Fall of the British Documentary Film* (Berkeley and London: University of California Press, 1975); Paul Swann, *The British Documentary Film Movement, 1926-1946* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989); Ian Aitken, *The Documentary Movement: An Anthology* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1998). This 'collapse' consensus has recently come under increased scholarly revisionist attention. See: Russell and Piers Taylor, *Shadows of Progress*; Brian Winston, *The Documentary Film Book* (London: British Film Institute, 2013); Boon, *Films of Fact*.

[112] Mise-en-scène as applied to cinema refers to everything that appears before the camera and its specific arrangement. It generally includes shot composition, which is particularly pertinent for my analysis as it incorporates the positioning and movement of actors and props within scenes. See David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson, *Film Art: An Introduction* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2010), pp. 175-228.

Returning to Foucault's concept of power and body – which suggested that power was an omnipresent force in society in which people internalised a managerial gaze to ensure conforming behaviour – notions of self-management were integral to tying ideas of the gaze and '*to-be-looked-at-ness*' of the body with individualism.[113] My conception of an internalised gaze within public health films derives from the aforementioned work of Mulvey, complicating the pleasure paradigm associated with her understanding of 'looking' and '*to-be-looked-at-ness*' as a propagator of dominant social ideologies.[114] While her psychoanalytically and Marxist orientated film theory emphasised the relationship between the 'male gaze' and female objects of visual pleasure within the context of narrative cinema, I argue that public health films employed an alternative visual rhetoric that utilised male and female bodies in conjunction with particular ways of seeing for quite different ends. Whereas Mulvey's constructed 'male gaze' depended upon defining women by their appearance – their '*to-be-looked-at-ness*' for the purposes of *pleasure* –, this is obfuscated by a public health-orientated image culture centred on portraying the *un-pleasurable*, the unattractive, the ugly as a means of encouraging behavioural change.[115] This propagation of the un-pleasurable body image represented an inversion of the 'male gaze' that nevertheless conformed to the dichotomous logic implicit in Mulvey's description of images as valorising the pleasurable object of vision. These health-centric images operated according to the understanding that the beautiful or pleasurable was the positive (and dominant) social image – its opposite was negative

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[113] Jones and Porter, 'Introduction', p. 9.

[114] See Laura Mulvey, 'Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema', *Screen* 16:3 (1975), pp. 6-18; Laura Mulvey, 'Afterthoughts on 'Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema' inspired by King Vidor's *Duel in the Sun* (1946)' in *Visual and Other Pleasures*, ed. by Laura Mulvey (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), pp. 31-40. This understanding of the 'male gaze' is rooted in the Frankfurt School's interpretations of Freudian psychoanalysis and Marxist cultural theory.

[115] For a detailed investigation into ideas of women and their ability to incite pleasure see: Sturken and Cartwright, *Practices of Looking*, pp. 72-81.

or grotesque, displaying a '*to-be-not-looked-at-ness*', and consequently the site for individualised behavioural change. Thus, by inverting the 'male gaze' and portraying the body at risk from disease, public health films relied on a particular set of viewing assumptions to construct meaning that built upon and extended the pre-established relationship between femininity, 'looking' and pleasure.

In order to illustrate how the public health film communicated an individualised conception of disease risk and the function of the 'gaze' within this process, I will analyse the Central Office of Information's short film *A Way of Life* as an early proponent of disseminating health advice on the risk factors associated with coronary heart disease using the film format. *A Way of Life* is evaluated as a particular moment, relevant to its time, in the establishment of individualised health priorities. At the same time it offers insights into the social attitudes towards bodies, gender, disease and food implicit within its representational strategies. These representational strategies connect the language (visual and verbal) and meaning in this film to that of culture and its relationship with ideas of beauty, gender and the body.[116] Yet, as an example of the health education film, *A Way of Life* did not just represent health and medicine in a cultural form but importantly sought to 'alter public behaviour to enhance health'.[117] It adopted the docudrama format to narrativise and dramatise the importance of healthy eating habits and regular exercise as forms of preventative medicine. In this way filmic techniques associated with fiction were linked with those related to documentary realism and documentary devices operating as stylistic features within dramatisation.

The COI used this focus on dramatisation as the principal method to achieve the individual-as-representative in *A Way of Life*. Thus, in order to convey not only

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[116] Stuart Hall, *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices* (Milton Keynes: The Open University, 1997), p. 15.

[117] Boon, 'Health Education Films in Britain', p. 45.

notions of medical authority concerning disease risk factors, but also how these risks can be internalised by the spectator, the film relied on a rendering of the human body that was distinct from cinematic preoccupations with the viewing relationship and its links to desire and pleasure.[118] Instead, it appropriated similar visual tropes but for very different expressive ends. Rather than an emphasis on *scopophilia* (the pleasure in looking), *exhibitionism* (the pleasure of being looked at) and *voyeurism* (the pleasure in looking while remaining unseen) bodies were displayed as overweight, unattractive and diseased.[119] In disseminating concepts of personal risk and the awareness of the need to motivate, *A Way of Life* altered the sexual positioning of its characters. While operating within the extant visual structure of emphasising male and female sexual difference, *A Way of Life* adjusted the spectatorial relationship in order to convey nutrition and health information. Although docudramas were typically filmed subsequent to the events they portrayed, this differentiation is muddied in relation to the public health film. By their very rationale, such public health films aimed at educating the public in order to initiate behavioural change on the part of the viewer at and within the contemporary moment. Therefore, public health films often employed the visual rhetoric of the docudrama to dramatise events, yet firmly established them within the existing and pressing public health rationale of the day.

A Way of Life is a dramatised documentary film that follows an episode in the life of a taxi-driver over the course of a single day who becomes involved in a near-fatal collision.[120] Following his hospitalisation he is later diagnosed with hypertension. His body weight is identified as a contributory factor in his illness.

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[118] Sturken and Cartwright, *Practices of Looking*, pp. 72-76.
[119] Sturken and Cartwright, *Practices of Looking*, p. 76.
[120] Taking the lead from Film Studies and its interest in mise-en-scène criticism, I will analyse these films in the present tense.

Thereafter he attends an obesity clinic where health problems associated with being overweight and difficulties linked with surgical procedures are discussed at length. At twenty-two minutes this film is situated within the documentary film tradition of producing educational shorts based on a single central theme. The choice of obesity here is noteworthy. At a time when the link between diet and any specific disease, such as coronary heart disease, remained too uncertain to warrant any direct governmental intervention in the form of targeted health education, possible risk factors became the key agent in discussing health and disease on a public platform. Even the clear wording for the governmental policy paper *Prevention and Health: Everybody's Business* of the same year (1976), would only cautiously admit that 'diet *may* play a part' in diseases associated with affluence.[121] Thus, obesity was visually framed as one such risk factor through which a myriad of health problems could be discussed and debated. It was closely linked with overeating and lack of exercise and therefore was an important intersection for discussing the associations between diet and exercise on the one hand and disease such as coronary heart disease and diabetes on the other.

The film opens with a montage of sepia-tinted shots depicting children at play. These are interspersed with shots of photographs (Figures 3.8 and 3.9), each portraying a still from these previous shots and always focussed on the active moment it wishes to represent. These images show a very specific imagining of children, healthiness, exercise and environment while evoking a nostalgic view of keeping active in childhood that was once entwined with games, sport and a sense of adventure. The non-diegetic music (music whose source is neither visible on the screen nor implied to be present in the scene) operates to link these disparate, yet

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[121] Museum of English Rural Life, J.H copy of *Prevention and Health: Everybody's Business*, 1976, Chapter VIII. Italics within quotation added by author.

thematically related images together, thereby providing continuity for the viewer. The score's lyrical composition, up-beat in tempo, reinforces the visual impression of the joys of physical activity and childhood independence. In doing so, these images suggest a collective loss in the freedom that childhood previously represented.[122] Moreover, this film strongly asserts that while some public health and education campaigns of the 1970s were seeking to confine childhood to the domestic sphere in order to protect them from 'dangerous' urban environments, other campaigns were utilising this sense of freedom and childhood liberation as a tool for fostering notions of healthiness, which were being visually constructed as in jeopardy from 'modern', changing lifestyles. *A Way of Life* utilises childhood and its once inherent sense of freedom to firmly frame obesity and chronic disease as a problem associated with these newly emerging lifestyles. As shown in the Figure 3.8, the child, unrestricted in its desire to move, play and explore represents the epitome of healthiness. The use of a sepia-tinted colour scheme and the placement of the photographs both further reinforce the idea of nostalgia. This was in stark contrast to the 'real time' scenes charting the ill health of the central male character, which, upon reflection, highlight and emphasise the importance of exercise for children and adults alike in order that they might enjoy and maintain good health. While not overtly proffering the notion of 'too little, too late' by way of behavioural change, the film does attempt to visually espouse that good health habits can never be practiced too soon if chronic disease is to be prevented.

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[122] See: Mathew Thomson, *Lost Freedom: The Landscape of the Child and the British Post-War Settlement* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), pp. 21-46.

Figure 3.8 and 3.9: Stills from *A Way of Life* (S. Clarkhall, Central Office of Information, 1976).

Following this sepia-tinted montage sequence set to the non-diegetic music, the remainder of the film, set in the then-present day, is transformed by the use of colour. As we follow a typical journey in the protagonist's cab, we become increasingly aware that he is suffering a visual ailment. The camera's use of distorted focus serves to display the driver's difficulty in negotiating his road journey safely. The functional signs of his illness, as espoused in Figure 3.10 and Figure 3.11, similarly disorientate the viewer and align them with the protagonist.

Figure 3.10 and 3.11: Stills from *A Way of Life* (S. Clarkhall, Central Office of Information, 1976).

The camera shots alternate between subjective point-of-view shots, unassigned close-ups and medium shots of both driver and passenger. Sudden cuts to black fragment the scene further, disorientating and disarming the viewer. This lost black space temporally unhinges the scene ensuring an uncertainty as to what exactly occurs in the interim, while the cut itself is occurring. As a visual tool, this device aimed to establish a sense of what the driver's physiological responses *feel* like, despite the intangibility of this in real terms. In similar ways, the use of sound in the diegesis (on-screen noise that is present in the scene), focused primarily on traffic noise for the most part, is ruptured during these cuts to black. This visual disorientation within the blackout un-anchors the viewer and their spatial relationship with the on-screen scene. By removing the viewer both visually and sonically from the incident, we are confronted with a new aural and visual relationship through which we are provoked into placing ourselves into the driver's physiological situation. We are exposed to his internal responses – in this case a physical as well as visual black out. This technique serves to visualise the invisible nature of somatic symptoms. Yet that visibility is in itself inherently invisible – that is we can visualise ourselves passing in and out of consciousness, yet its visual incomprehension makes it impossible to portray. The skill of the filmmaker, therefore, is in being able to represent this invisibility through a visual medium – making the individual case representative of the general, or at least identifiable.

As the film continues, the driver is finally diagnosed with hypertension, linked to his weight. A doctor warns him 'if you don't lose weight now, you would end up a permanent invalid … at best'. He further laments that in contemporary culture 'too many people think the only reason to lose weight it to look more attractive', yet the real stimuli – disease prevention and increased longevity – are continually undermined or ignored: 'it's not just a matter of looks, being fat invites serious heart disease and heart disease can kill'. During these explanatory scenes, the doctor's surgery is interrupted by cuts to static images of the technology used by medical professionals for the testing and treatment of coronary heart disease. As Boon argued, British documentaries can be viewed as a 'modernist celebration… of modernity, and especially of technological modernity'.[123] In this way, applied science and technology were enduring and omnipresent themes in sponsored films throughout the postwar period.[124] As the number of television documentaries increased, so too did the reporting of science and medicine. I shall argue later that the television documentaries, *Lessons from the Dead* and *Lessons for the Living* (both 1987)*,* utilised a live reportage style that reinforced those notions of modernity as medical and scientific technology was coded as 'new' and 'innovative'.

While the opening montage employed non-diegetic sound to inform and reinforce the visual components of the sequence, the film's portrayal of a contemporary obesity clinic combines staged close-ups of overweight bodies divorced into their distinct parts, with a voice-over of patients' own opinions and thoughts on their respective body weight. This documentary employs actual cases as a linking device to make the dramatised events appear more *real*, more tangible and therefore more pressing. Notably, and in despite of the dramatic focus on the taxi driver as a typical example in expressing the proliferation of chronic disease in men, the content and form of these voice-overs are all articulated by women. Similarly, the visual accompaniments (shown in Figure 6, Figure 7, Figure 8 and Figure 9) are suggested to be female bodies. This gender dichotomy is particularly noteworthy considering the death rates from diseases such as coronary heart disease and diabetes were rising more quickly for men than women during the 1970s.[125]

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[123] Boon, ' Science, Society and Documentary', p. 322.

[124] Boon, 'Science, Society and Documentary', pp. 322-323. These had been important tropes in interwar and wartime technology documentaries such as *The Coming of the Dial* (1933), *Face of Britain* (1935) and *We Live in Two Worlds* (1937).

[125] DHSS, *Diet and Coronary Heart Disease* (London: HMSO, 1976), p. 26.

(Clockwise from top left) Figure 3.12, Figure 3.13, Figure 3.14, Figure 3.15: Stills from *A Way of Life* (S. Clarkhall, Central Office of Information, 1976).

Therefore, not only do these visual sequences, divorced through the use of the voice-over from the central docu-drama approach of the previous (and subsequent) scenes, raise issues about target audience, but they also ask questions about gender and the representation of the body. In ways not dissimilar to how the beautiful/ugly and healthy/unhealthy nexus was established in the ‘Do you hold your breath when a man looks at you?’ poster that introduced this chapter, these sequences portray the obese body in unattractive ways. At certain points the voice-over reinforces these links between the unhealthy and the ugly, with one individual in particular highlighting how being obese makes ‘you feel unattractive and nothing interests you’. Consequently, the long-term effects of obesity on the body are conveyed in terms of their tangible effects on personal quality of life. The visual and verbal language employed to characterise those who have, or are at risk from, disease is not to link this category to the healthy body but to understand it as a corruption of the collective good, the neglect of the individual as responsible for his or her own health status. Trying to un-code and decode these sets of images raises central issues regarding the representation of women and their bodies in health educational material. It is perhaps useful to note at this juncture that at no stage in this film do we view the body of the named protagonist, unclothed or otherwise. Rather, as shown in Figure 3.12, Figure 3.13 and Figure 3.14 it was permissible to portray the unnamed, female body – often separated visually into specific body parts, be they the legs or the stomach – with a '*to-be-not-looked-at-ness'*. The gendering of these scenes, themselves founded upon notions of bodily, rather than biological, difference that is considered to be outside of or untouched by history or culture, is therefore of key interest in visually analysing the text as a visual representation of the (apparently gendered) individual.[126]

The alignment of this beautiful/ugly dichotomy with the female body in relation to obesity was reflective of particular gendered notions that have been discussed concerning a range of diverse images in both Chapter One and Chapter Two. In those chapters, I analysed images in relation to changing female roles in both the home and workplace during the wartime and immediate postwar years, yet demonstrated how changes were slow to be reflected in images which attempted to visualise those time periods. By extending this discussion, these specific sequences in *A Way of Life* suggest another distinct approach to visualising women in the postwar period. Many historians of the body, while accepting that it is a social construct that changes over time, also perceive it as a contested space. Within this space are marked differences in how cultural discourses relate to women's own attitudes about their respective bodies.[127] As proposed by Roy Porter we should 'look at the body as it has

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[126] Sonya O. Rose, *What is Gender History?* (Cambridge and Malden, MA: Polity, 2010), p. 18.

[127] Margaret A. Lowe, 'From Robust Appetites to Calorie Counting: The Emergence of Dieting Among Smith College Students in the 1920s', in *Women and Health in America*, ed. by Judith Walzer Leavitt (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1999), pp. 172-173.

been experienced and expressed within particular cultural systems, both private and public, which themselves have changed over time'.[128] Further, 'if bodies are present to us only through perceiving them, then the history of bodies must incorporate the history of their perceptions'.[129] In filmic terms, therefore, the use of voice-over in *A Way of Life*, when used in conjunction with the images portrayed, is a representational tool that serves to highlight the discrete and individualised ways in which the body interacts and intersects with disease and health risk. The aural interplay contextualises and elevates the visual power of the images.

As the doctor prefaces this sequence, 'the fat person's life can be extremely unpleasant and you may not discover that until it's too late'. These images are clearly linked, through the cinematic technique of the voice-over, to broader societal norms regarding personal attractiveness, body weight, self-control and self-esteem.[130] As seen in Figure 3.13, leg sores are depicted as only one outcome of excess body weight on health. The camera zooms in to emphasise the sores themselves, as they slowly become the visual focus in the frame. This concentration on an unattractive effect of obesity is confirmed through a sense of inadequacy and personal failure that is revealed through the voice-over. It is autobiographical, evoking the diegesis that constitutes the film's 'present' to authenticate the message of the docudrama format that is underpinning the film as a whole. By combining an aesthetic which elevates the ugly and not the beautiful with the realist features of the docudrama, the film attempts to convey the informative with the alarming – exposing a specific visual rationale in efforts to instigate change in personal health behaviours.

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[128] Roy Porter, 'History of the Body Reconsidered' in *New Perspectives on Historical Writing*, ed. by Peter Burke (Cambridge: Polity, 1991), p. 208.
[129] Porter, 'History of the Body Reconsidered', p. 208.
[130] Various anon. contributors, *A Way of Life*, 11.58-12.40.

By promoting the ugly aspects of disease risk, I have demonstrated that the film adopted a very different approach to aestheticisation than many of the static images discussed in other sections of this chapter. To refer briefly back to Figure 3.1, the opening image of this chapter, this poster conformed to the assertion that the culture of public health advertising, of which health education was an important part, utilised contemporaneous 'notions of health and beauty, ugliness and disease, in complicated ways'.[131] In line with the work of Sander Gilman, this visual representation of better health and its relationship with the body was an aestheticised one, but one that endorsed the beautiful in society at the expense of those contemporaneously perceived as 'ugly'.[132] Whilst he discussed this aestheticisation in relation to how visual images were used to evoke particular responses to AIDS, primarily in a US context, the visual and verbal language employed is applicable to other films (and indeed posters) produced at different times, in different national contexts and in relation to different health risks. The public health film of the 1970s appropriated these contemporaneous notions of beauty and risk to highlight how moving images in *A Way of Life* contributed to a new interpretation of the 'male-gaze' centred on inverting '*to-be-looked-at-ness*' for individualised public health ends.

Investigating Nutrition and Health: The Commericialisation of Health Education in *Lessons from the Dead* and *Lessons for the Living*

In an interview with the *This Week* programme in 1987, David Player, Director of the HEC, outlined the importance of '*moving* from a national sickness service to a

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[131] Gilman, *Health and Illness*, p. 115.

[132] This idea of the aestheticisation of images to simplify the lived complexity of disease and illness is discussed in detail with reference to the 'beautiful body' and AIDS in Gilman, *Health and Illness,* pp. 115-172.

national health service'.[133] His choice of the word 'moving', although largely unconscious, provides a key hermeneutic filter for thinking about health education in relation to public service television. While he was discussing a shift in approaches to healthcare practice, his language evoked a possible way of achieving this transfer from curative to preventive medicine – through the 'active' nature of film and television.[134] Building on a main concern of this chapter thus far – how both the public health poster and film visually 'move' nutrition and health into the public imagination – television similarly utilised important visual tools in the discussion of medicine and science. While the realm of television and the role of investigative journalism exposed different narrative foci for allocating responsibility for disease and health, the composition and visual arrangement of televisual documentaries still revealed contemporaneous notions regarding the role of bodies, health and food in the disease prevention process and how these were being 'moved' into public focus. By examining a particular two-part edition of the current affairs programme, ITV's *This Week*, the following section will show how community health and health education were developing a disease prevention agenda of their own.

In setting out the would-be parameters of public health in relation to a 'national *health* service', Player identified the wider need for public health interventions and prevention programmes on a national scale.[135] While one important means of achieving this was to redirect emphasis from the vital service of the hospital to the community through the creation of neighbourhood health centres (primary care initiatives); public health campaigning that focussed on disseminating health

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[133] *This Week, Lessons from the Dead* (1987), <https://www.bfi.org.uk/inview/title/12369> [accessed 12 March 2014]. Italics added by author.

[134] By using the word 'active' I suggest that moving pictures, be they film or television, embody movement and action purposefully to demonstrate their argument. It is their very ability to 'move' or 'act' which separates them from their static, printed counterparts.

[135] Use of italics here is to reference the stress Player placed on the word 'health' in this interview.

information was similarly exploited.[136] Player's appearance on the *This Week: Lessons from the Dead* and *Lessons for the Living* programmes, therefore, revealed an increased appreciation on the part of the HEC of the potential role that documentary television could play in broadcasting health information to the British public. While Player's own motivations may have been more ambiguous, his inclusion in this mini-series highlighted the new ways in which government-funded bodies were exploiting the mass media to forward their own policy agendas.[137]

So far, this chapter has almost exclusively concentrated on government-funded health education initiatives through the auspices of the HEC and the Central Office for Information. Conversely, this section will utilise current affairs programming within commercial television to highlight the mutually supportive role of public service broadcasting produced by Independent Television in Britain. Moreover, it will show the visual continuity that such programming employed in discussing and disseminating information regarding the general health status of the population. Although public health had been utilising the propagandist potential of both the poster and the motion picture from the early twentieth century, the use of television as an education medium was a truly postwar development.[138]

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[136] See: Jane Lewis, *What Price Community Medicine? The Philosophy, Practice and Politics of Public Health since 1919* (Brighton: Wheatsheaf Books, 1986), pp. 73-74; John Welshman, 'The Medical Office of Health in England and Wales, 1900-1974: watchdog or lapdog?' *Journal of Public Health Medicine* 19:4 (1997), pp. 443-450; John Welshman and Jam Walmsley, *Community Care in Perspective: care, control and citizenship* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006).

[137] This ambiguity refers to in the rapid replacement of the HEC with the Health Education Authority in the week separating the transmission of *Lessons from the Dead* and *Lessons for the Living,* and the subsequent non-renewal of Player's contract on the part of the DHSS –, See: Sutherland, *Health Education – Half a Policy*, pp. 105-106; Max Blythe, *Dr David Player in Interview with Max Blythe* (Oxford, 1988), Oxford Brookes Special Collections MSVA 032.

[138] For a general investigation into the postwar role of television in British culture see: Joe Moran, *Armchair Nation: An Intimate History of Britain in Front of the TV* (London: Profile Books, 2013). During the postwar period, government increasingly identified television as an important means of conveying health information, particularly to children. TNA, HO 256/406, 'Report of an Enquiry into the Special Contribution which Television Might be Expected to Make', 1954, p. 4; TNA, ED 235/10, *Report by H.M. Inspectors on a Survey of the Use of Broadcasts*, 1971, pp. 6-7.

The potential power of television as an important platform for conveying visual representations of science (and thus, by extension medicine and health) was recognised almost immediately once public broadcasting recommenced in 1946.[139] As Tim Boon expounded, the rapid growth of television ownership in Britain during the 1950s 'revolutionised the visual representation of science and vastly expanded its audience'.[140] Science programming quickly became an important component of both the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) and Independent Television (ITV)'s schedule, and by the mid-1960s a new approach on television that aimed to present science as an 'essential part of our twentieth-century culture' was adopted.[141] In particular *Eye on Research* (1957-61), *Your Life in Their Hands* (1958), *Absolute Zero* (1960) and *Horizon* (1964-present) established the importance of live outside broadcast television to the documentary format.[142] At the same time, current affairs style programming was similarly promoted within both public and commercial broadcasting alike. *Panorama* (1953-present), *This Week* (1956-1978, 1986-1992), *World in Action* (1963-1998) and *Dispatches* (1987-present) all subscribed to the 'something must be done' school of investigative journalism. As suggested by Patricia Holland, their 'sense of purpose underpinned television's, and particularly commercial television's, claim to nurture informed citizenship and the core values of

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[139] Television transmission commenced in Britain by the BBC in 1936. Broadcasting was halted by the War and was restarted with increased vigour in 1946. Boon, *Films of Fact*, p. 184; Boon, 'British Science Documentaries: Transitions from Film to Television', *Journal of British Cinema and Television* 10:3 (2013), pp. 475-477. Both however, tend to focus on the transition from film reel documentaries to the live television style favoured by the early television documentarists particularly Duncan Ross at the BBC. Similarly, Boon's discussions are almost exclusively focussed on the BBC with little attention paid to the efforts of commercial television stations particularly Independent Television (ITV) and later Channel 4.

[140] Boon, *Films of Fact*, p. 184.

[141] Independent Television (ITV) was established in 1955 as a commercial enterprise funded in the main through selling advertising space. It was subject to strict regulation and certain public obligations. Tim Boon, 'British Science Documentaries' pp. 475-497. In particular, *Horizon* paved the way in terms of science documentaries. Initially it adopted a magazine-style, presenter-led format but later returned to the more traditional, filmic mode of narration-led, film-centred approach.

[142] Boon, 'British Science Documentaries', pp. 487-498; Kelly Loughlin, 'Your Life in Their Hands: The context of a medical-media controversy', *Media History* 6:2 (2000), pp. 177-188.

democracy itself'.[143] Thus, ITV's commitment to public service broadcasting continued apace. This policy was evident in attempts to bolster its 'serious' programming content by broadcasting investigative current affairs programmes as mainstays of its schedule.[144]

Much of the historical work focused on television documentary remains attached to either examining the filmmaker and/or programme style issues such as programme content and reception. Cultural studies have largely concentrated on how television programming constructed meanings but almost exclusively in terms of audience.[145] Similarly, there has been an academic emphasis on the BBC and its position as a *whole institution*.[146] Contrarily, until recently, studies that examined the role of ITV have tended to do so only as part of a broader analysis of certain programming styles or forms of narrative television.[147]

This Week was first launched in 1956 to engage with viewers as participating citizens rather than as passive consumers.[148] By the mid-1980s (and having undergone

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[143] Patricia Holland, *The Angry Buzz: This Week and Current Affairs Television* (I.B. Tauris, London: 2006), p. xiv.

[144] Holland, *The Angry Buzz*, p. xviii. This desire for 'serious' television is discussed further in Richard Lindley, *Panorama: Fifty Years of Pride and Paranoia* (London: Politico's Publishing, 2002), pp. 147-150.

[145] For the former see: Boon, *Films of Fact*; Boon, 'British Science Documentaries'; Russell and Piers Taylor, *Shadows of Progress* and Winston, *The Documentary Film Book.* For the latter see: David Morley, *Television Audiences and Cultural Studies* (London: Routledge, 1992); James Curran and David Morley, *Media and Cultural Theory* (London and New York: Routledge, 2006); John Corner, *Popular Television in Britain: Studies in Cultural History* (London: British Film Institute Publishing, 1991).

[146] Asa Briggs, *The BBC: The First Fifty Years* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985); Briggs, *The History of Broadcasting in the United Kingdom*, Five Volumes (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995 reprint); An official history of ITV was written by Bernard Sendall, *Independent Television in Britain: Volume 1, Origin and Foundation, 1946-1962* (London: Macmillan, 1982) and Sendall, *Independent Television in Britain: Volume 2, Expansion and Change, 1958-1968* (London: Macmillan, 1983).

[147] This academic preference for BBC-based histories has recently begun to be redressed. In particular, *ITV Cultures: Independent Television Over Fifty Years*, ed. by Catherine Johnson and Rob Turnock (Maidenhead: Open University Press, 2005); Michael Darlow, *Independents Struggle: The Programme Makers Who Took on the TV Establishment* (London: Quartet Books, 2004); Rob Turnock, *Television and Consumer Culture: Britain and the Transformation of Modernity* (London, I.B. Tauris, 2007).

[148] Holland, *The Angry Buzz*, pp. xviii. This idea of 'passive' television consumption dogged ITV from the outset. Its commerciality and programme scheduling choices, which were often perceived as 'light', not vigorous and mere 'entertainment', affected its reputation as a provider of more academic, meaningful television. Its commitment to current affairs, therefore, was continuously trying to redress

one reincarnation as *TV Eye* [1978-1986]), *This Week* was committed to investigative journalism with a 'social conscience'.[149] The airing of the two-part *Lessons from the Dead* and *Lessons for the Living* edition was instigated in the main by the publication of a report carried out by the Heartbeat Wales initiative in 1987.[150] The programme's opening dialogue clearly identified the imminent publication of this Heartbeat Wales report into mortality statistics in Britain as the necessary justification for carrying out its own independent inquiry into the health of the British population. To this end, the programme focused on Sheffield as a case study to highlight the growing inequity in health that was evident in contemporaneous Britain. While this Heartbeat Wales report represented the largest statistical survey investigating the health of the population conducted in Britain at that time, the limited study carried out by the investigators of *This Week* used first-person interviews, visual forms of displaying statistical information and the machinations of local health planning to illustrate similar health inequalities.[151] In doing so, the programme exposed similar approaches to conveying health information regarding food and the body as that of official governmental bodies. It utilised concepts of lifestyle choice, behavioural risk and

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this balance. See: Catherine Johnson and Rob Turnock, 'Introduction' in *ITV Cultures: Independent Television*, ed. by Johnson and Turnock, pp. 1-14.

[149] Holland, *The Angry Buzz*, pp. xiv-xv.

[150] This was outlined by the show's presenter Jonathan Dimbleby at the beginning of *Lessons from the Dead*. Heartbeat Wales (originally the Wales Heart Project) which was a pilot project conducted by the HEC from 1982 to 1987. In line with other Council campaigns, the programme intended to be broad based and drew together activities in schools, adult education, professional education, primary and secondary health care and the mass media. Heartbeat Wales operated concurrently to the next phase of the 'Look After Yourself' campaign, which was still providing educative functions on a positive health theme but with a reduced, if comparable, responsibility than during the previous phase. Heartbeat Wales incorporated an intensive, comprehensive and coordinated programme for health education with the intention of developing and evaluating a regional strategy, in collaboration with local agencies, which could later be applied to other regions. From 1987 it was extended nationwide as the 'Look After Your Heart' campaign and worked in tandem with the 'Heartbeat 2000' initiative. See: TNA, Health Education papers, FP 1/14/3, 1982/3, Health Education Council meetings; TNA, Health Education papers, FP 1/14/4, 1982, Health Education Council meetings; TNA, Health Education Council papers, FP 1/15, 1983, Health Education Council meetings; TNA, Health Education Council papers, FP 1/15, Health Education Council meetings.

[151] *This Week: Lessons from the Dead* (ITV, 1987), <https://www.bfi.org.uk/inview/title/12369> [accessed 12 March 2014].

epidemiological risk factors in uncomplicated applied ways to convey similar health strategies for prevention. Moreover, it utilised its ability to find the 'human face behind the news story' to extrapolate the same findings to the rest of the country, yet again showing the individual as representative while simultaneously identifying that same individual as the central purveyor of change. Yet, in doing so, this geographical specificity resultantly negated any tangible impact local contexts elsewhere may have had on health inequalities and outcomes. The structure and content of the programme showed an awareness (at least in production terms) of the multifaceted nature of disseminating information about individualised health behaviour on a national level, while concurrently appreciating the need for region specific health practices which facilitated the targeting of services. Yet, the host Jonathan Dimbleby still assuredly asserted that ' … as in other deprived areas of Britain, the poor are destined to grow up with an average life expectancy five, six or even seven years below that of the rich'.[152]

Within the context of current affairs programming, *This Week: Lessons from the Dead* and *Lessons for the Living* framed disease in terms of a rich-poor divide. This recognition of such a divide gained national prominence with the publication of *The Black Report* (1980), which explored the social distribution of mortality and morbidity in the thirty years since the establishment of the National Health Service.[153] Upon completion, it documented widespread disparity between rich and poor in terms of health, which was not being adequately addressed by the NHS. Presented as it was to an incoming Conservative government intent on cutting public expenditure, the Report was at first delayed, but later published with a short print run on a Bank

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[152] *This Week: Lessons from the Dead* (ITV, 1987), <https://www.bfi.org.uk/inview/title/12369> [accessed 12 March 2014].

[153] William D. Dressler, 'Explaining Health Inequalities', in *Health, Risk and Adversity*, ed. by Catherine Panter-Brick and Agustín Fuentes (Oxford and New York: Berghahn Books, 2009), p. 175.

Holiday weekend and with only limited same day press coverage.[154] This resulted in a media furore with accusations of a cover-up greatly increasing public awareness of the role socio-economic status and poverty was playing in terms of mortality.[155] However, the Report prompted little in tangible policy terms and by the mid-1980s the HEC's Player commissioned a follow-up research paper. The resultant *The Health Divide* (1987) was published directly by the HEC and further emphasised these health inequalities.[156] Together, *The Black Report*, *The Health Divide* and the Heartbeat Wales report received considerable press attention that provoked further televisual coverage. It is therefore unsurprising that contemporaneous issues regarding health policy, mortality rates and the NHS would become subjects increasingly exploited in the *This Week* programme in Britain. Indeed, the production of Lessons from the Dead during 1987 suggests that heart disease was beginning to be framed in terms of poverty and socio-economic status, complicating understandings regarding dietary excess and affluence.

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[154] Berridge, 'Introduction: Inequalities and Health' in *Poor Health: Social Inequality Before and After the Black Report*, ed. by Virginia Berridge and Stuart Blume (London: Frank Cass Publishers, 2003), pp. 1-12.

[155] Berridge, 'The Black Report: Interpreting History', *Health Inequalities: Evidence, Policy and Implementation Proceedings from a Meeting of the Health Equity Network*, ed. by Adam Oliver and Mark Exworthy (London: The Nuffield Trust, 2003), available at <http://www.nuffieldtrust.org.uk/sites/files/nuffield/publication/health-inequalities-mar03.pdf> [accessed 4 May 2014].

[156] As explained in Max Blythe's interview with David Player, this report was published on site by the HEC. In this interview, Player expands 'I printed two and a half thousand copies, sent them out to all the media, [and] called a press conference'. Blythe, *Dr. David Player in Interview with Max Blythe*, MSVA 032.

Figure 3.16 and 3.17: ***This Week: Lessons from the Dead*** **(ITV: 1987).**

Of the two-part *This Week* programme, *Lessons from the Dead* was more intently centred on emphasising the issue of health inequalities in 1980s Britain. It employed a number of visual tools aimed at succinctly exemplifying the health problems facing the nation in uncomplicated terms. In particular, the programme illustrated the widening gap in health issues and the probable effect on mortality by dividing a group of school children in a playground into two separate groups (Figure 3.16). Through narration we are informed that those on one side represented the more affluent sections of Sheffield society, while those on the opposite symbolised lower socio-economic backgrounds. In slow motion the children then fall to the ground, as visual casualties of premature mortality, emphasising that as the voiceover states ‘these deaths are not evenly shared by the population of Sheffield’. As the children are shown to fall in a long shot, there is a cut to a montage of closer shots in slow motion, displaying individuals or small groups of children while emphasising specific bodies and faces in their downward movement. These close-ups make their youth more readily apparent to the viewer, underscoring issues of age and life expectancy within the context of health inequalities. The visualisation of these mortality statistics and their inherent inequity stress that just as 'healthy children make healthy adults' (as was stated in the lead-in interview to this section) the opposite is also true, that 'conversely, sick children make sick adults'.

While all the children ultimately collapse (Figure 3.17), those representing the poorer parts of the city do so more quickly and in greater numbers than those children representing wealthier parts of the city. As simply articulated by Dimbleby: 'if you live in a poorer part of the city then you are more than twice as likely to die before the age of retirement than if your home is on the richer side of town'. While the socio-economic background of the children involved in this visualisation of health inequity is unknown, that the child served as an indicator of this disparity remains noteworthy. Not only does it build on the visual lineage, established during the war and continued into the 1950s and 1960s, of depicting children to emphasise a health risk, but during the 1970s and 1980s medical scientists were increasingly identifying childhood as a key period during which predisposition to disease was determined. A leading article in the British Medical Journal from April 1970 focussed on obesity in childhood, addressing not only the dangers of obesity developmentally, but also the long-term effects on adult health.[157] Moreover, by situating this performance in the school

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[157] Anon, 'The Overweight Child', *British Medical Journal*, 2:5701 (1970), pp. 64-65; James J. Nora in the Journal of Paediatrics, reported on a study completed in Denver, Colorado, where the genetic epidemiology of early-onset ischaemic heart disease (IHD) in a white population living in the Denver metropolitan area, was analysed to apply such data to the identification of the child at risk for IHD in adult life in Identifying the Child at Risk for Coronary Heart Disease as an Adult: A Strategy for Prevention', *Journal of Paediatrics*, 97:5 (1980), pp. 706-714; A similar study conducted by D.J.P. Barker and C. Osmond of the MRC Epidemiology Unit at the University of Southampton concluded that adverse influences in childhood, associated with poor living standards, increase susceptibility to

playground and centring that game on the children falling down, the programme was perhaps drawing an unspecified visual association with the children's' game 'ring-a-ring 'o roses'. Itself often associated with the Black Death; this game (and rhyme) inherently held connotations of premature death.[158] Its abstract enactment here, therefore, not only connected children to the notion of mortality but also brought such notions into a distinctly twentieth-century health context. The accompanying music utilised the gong of a bell against a synthesized background perhaps indicating that public health agencies and health care practitioners must act quickly if these inequalities in health are to be redressed – time is running out.

By focusing certain scenes on the mortal body of the child, *Lessons from the Dead* was not only coding premature mortality in terms of long-term risk but also identifying children as central targets for prevention. While cinema attendance had long been predicated by targeting certain demographics – children, teenagers, adults etc., current affairs television programming was almost exclusively aimed at politically engaged adults.[159] Therefore, the use of children as a metaphorical tool in this programme was particularly pertinent. As outlined in Chapters One and Two, throughout the postwar period, women and mothers were encouraged to stay at home to look after young children and maintain the nuclear family ideal.[160] As psychology became an important component of the mid-century version of scientific motherhood,

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other influences, associated with affluence, encountered in later life in 'Infant Mortality, Childhood Nutrition and Ischaemic Heart Disease in England and Wales', *The Lancet*, 10 May 1986, p. 1080.

[158] While this association with the Black Death is largely considered to be nothing more than urban legend, it remains a prominent understanding of this singing rhyme. Peter and Iona Opie had explained this in more detail in *The Singing Game* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1985).

[159] Boon, 'Science, Society and Documentary', pp. 320-327.

[160] For more detail see Chapter One and Chapter Two. Also: Jane Lewis, *The Problem of Lone Mother Families in Twentieth Century Britain* (London : Suntory-Toyota International Centre for Economics and Related Disciplines, 1995); Angela Davis, *Modern Motherhood: Women and Family in England, 1945-2000* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2012); Angela Davis, 'Oral History and the Creation of Collective Memories: Women's experience of motherhood in Oxfordshire c. 1945-1970', *University of Sussex Journal of Contemporary History* 10 (2006), pp. 1-10.

issues like nutrition and diet received less dedicated attention.[161] Yet as the century progressed and deaths from chronic diseases proliferated, possible causal links between childhood obesity and malnutrition secured increased medical research.[162] These links in turn received press attention, particularly in the science and medicine columns of local and national newspapers.[163] If predisposition to diseases such as heart disease was determined in infancy and/or childhood, then the onus of responsibility lay with the mother, who was still socially coded as the primary caregiver in society. Thus, by taking the tenets of scientific motherhood to their logical conclusion, women were not only obliged to heed contemporaneous advice on best practice as a mother (taking into consideration childhood development theory), but were also required to teach their children accepted health behaviours. And as the postwar period progressed this increasingly included knowledge about healthy diets, anti-smoking behaviour and encouraging childhood exercise.[164] In this way, *This Week* was implicitly identifying and extending similar gendered social tropes as their governmental counterparts. Continuing the health education tradition of targeting women as the primary force for enacting healthy behaviours that persisted en masse since the War, commercial television was similarly, albeit less noticeably, adopting a female-centric view of health conduct. In this way, commercial television was reinforcing similar visual norms regarding health, gender and in this case, inequality.

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[161] For the development of scientific motherhood in postwar United States see: Rima Apple, *Perfect Motherhood: Science and Childrearing in America* (New Brusnwick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2006), pp. 107-134. See also: Harry Hendrick, *Children, Childhood and English Society, 1880-1990* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Mathew Thomson, *Psychological Subjects: Identity, Culture and Health in Twentieth Century Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), Thomson, *Lost Freedom*, pp. 79-105.

[162] Anon, 'The Overweight Child', *British Medical Journal*, 2:5701 (1970), pp. 64-65; Nora 'Identifying the Child at Risk for Coronary Heart Disease as an Adult', *Journal of Paediatrics*, 97:5 (1980), pp. 706-714; Barker and Osmond 'Infant Mortality, Childhood Nutrition and Ischaemic Heart Disease in England and Wales', *The Lancet*, 10 May 1986, p. 1080.

[163] For example: Anon, 'Children Face Heart Risk', *The Times*, 18 April 1972.

[164] To make this point I am extrapolating Rima Apple's idea of scientific motherhood to include changing health advice in line with epidemiologically-focused public health policy.

While focus on a rich/poor divide represented a different analytical lens for exploring the issues of health and diet in postwar Britain, it still relied on pre-determined visual representations and certain understandings of the gendered body to construct meaning.

In exploring the many multi-faceted causes of health inequality in Britain, the programme identified numerous social, environmental and financial factors as contributing to the extension of this national split. In particular, it focused on limited employment opportunities, low pay and lack of health education as central contributory factors in the widespread presence of various risk factors for disease within lower socio-economic groupings. To discuss and develop these topics further the programme used a range of instructive dissemination techniques including interviews, explanatory film shorts, footage of health planning and filmed examples of community health projects (e.g. mobile cervical cancer screening units). In particular, Dimbleby conducted a number of short interviews with female Sheffield factory workers within the workplace environment. While other interviews were conducted throughout the two-part programme, it is noteworthy that these specific interviews were the only ones carried out solely with women, and the only ones to take place within a factory environment.[165] In ways not dissimilar to government-sponsored health education material, women were identified as key agents in disseminating health information regarding chronic disease and associated risk factors. While their societal role as mothers was not identified as a key concern in targeting them as agents for change, it was clear that as the main representative of working class women in this programme, they were being identified as the central individual responsible for household care and well-being.

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[165] Other interviews are carried out with working-class men in a Working Man’s Club and with medical professionals – a health visitor, Julia Cumberlege, Chairman of the Brighton Health Authority, Director of the HEC, consultant responsible for the Keralia Project in Finland.

Figure 3.18 and 3.19: ***This Week: Lessons from the Dead*** **(ITV, 1987).**

In interviewing three working-class women in detail, and interspersing their responses throughout the programme, *This Week* established the health of women as of central importance in improving mortality statistics and their attachment to socio-economic status. In the course of these interviews the camera focused on cigarette smoking as a central factor that might have been influencing mortality. As evidenced in Figure 3.18, two of the three women were smoking while being interviewed and when this was addressed by the programme (through a cut-in to a close-up on an ashtray filled with cigarette ash as shown in Figure 3.19 rather than a direct interview question), one female interviewee explains her attitude: ‘Gives me a bad health, cigarettes, but I need to smoke ‘cause I can’t have any other pleasure out in life like goin’ for a drink or anything else so I turn to cigarettes’. When asked how many she smokes a day, she responded ‘forty, fifty a day. I should cut down really but its one of the hazards of life. I have cigarettes instead of drink’. This comparison of smoking as a personal vice similar to drinking alcohol is pertinent. Betsy Thom has identified two major shifts in how alcohol has been conceptualised within British health policy.[166] The first is evidenced by the abandonment of the ‘moral’ model of alcoholism and

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[166] Betsy Thom, *Dealing with Drink, Alcohol and Social Policy: From Treatment to Management* (London: Free Association Books, 1999).

excessive alcohol consumption, while the second considered alcohol consumption within the epidemiological model of public health and measured it against concepts of lifestyle choice and behavioural risk.[167] By redefining alcohol in the same heath policy rhetoric as smoking and unhealthy diets, alcohol was similarly constructed as personalised and individualised. Therefore, during the 1970s and 1980s in Britain food was being identified as just one amongst a number of factors considered to be contributing to high mortality rates from cardiovascular disease. The government and commercial entities alike employed a multi-factorial approach that sought reduction in *all* personal behaviours considered detrimental to health.

The programmes' emphasis on poverty and the plight of the poor in achieving good health showed that some health advice was being successfully communicated to the public, especially in the area of diet and food.[168] When the interview turned to discussing diet, the interviewee not only lists her daily dietary intake but also concedes that this 'junk food' which is the mainstay of her diet is ' ... not really no good for you'.[169] The scene is formulated so that the camera tracks in on the interviewee's upper-body and face, so that her youth is more readily apparent. Another female contributor agreed, asserting that there were financial constraints in attaining a healthy diet and that on their income better quality food products were just not an option.[170] While the programme did not comment explicitly on the need for healthier, better diets on the part of the poor, it did state that such improvements were necessary to break this fundamental link between poverty and poor health. To this

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[167] Virginia Berridge, Rachel Herring and Betsy Thom, 'Binge Drinking: A Confused Concept and its Contemporary History', *Social History of Medicine* 22:3 (2009), pp. 597-607.

[168] It remains unclear whether dissemination is being achieved through government-sponsored health campaigns, private industry advertising campaigns or the prominent low-fat and slimming culture propagated in part primarily through women's magazines and consumer advertisements.

[169] *This Week: Lessons from the Dead* (ITV, 1987), <https://www.bfi.org.uk/inview/title/12369> [accessed 12 March 2014].

[170] *This Week: Lessons from the Dead* (ITV, 1987), <https://www.bfi.org.uk/inview/title/12369> [accessed 14 March 2014].

end, it interviewed Player and Julia Cumberlege, the Conservative Chairman of the Brighton Health Authority. Player emphasised the need for dedicated commitment to narrowing this divide in Britain, in part through campaigning initiatives, whereas Cumberlege was a major proponent of the primary care initiatives that involved targeting particular health services to particular localities. Therefore, while this programme was ostensibly focussed on health inequalities and the way these played out within a specified local context in Britain, it simultaneously acted as a form of information provision, highlighting and emphasising hazards to health and ways to engage in more healthy personal behaviours. *This Week: Lessons from the Dead* and *Lessons to the Living* can be read as a manifestation of health education shrouded within the mantel of current affairs programming. It concluded that in 1980s Britain, health policy, politics, poverty and chronic disease were inextricably linked to the form, content and practice of health education concerning diet and disease.

Conclusion

This chapter has examined the role of images, both static and moving, as agents of preventive medicine in 1970s and 1980s Britain. Through a close reading of these images, it has exposed the intersection between gender, beauty, modernity and consumer culture in ‘selling’ health as a preventive medicine. Through the methodology of visual culture, I have emphasised the role of the visual as forms of communication, which forwarded implicit and explicit messages about health, the body and individual responsibilities. In this way, images represent largely untapped sources for understanding the ways health policy was enacted in social contexts. I have historicised and problematised these images, emphasising their inherent use of the gendered body and body image to teach the public about food, diet and health.

These images employed particular visual tropes, themselves centred on the '*to-be-looked-at-ness'* of the body and the interrelated significance of the 'gaze'. I have explored these themes and linked them to wider developments in public health, particularly the centrality of the individual and the importance of lifestyle change to disease diminution. Through analyses of the governmental health campaign, 'Look After Yourself'; the public information film *A Way of Life*; and the documentary television two-part programme, *This Week: Lessons from the Dead* and *Lessons for the Living*, I have emphasised how they contribute to the construction of normative understandings of the body and healthiness, which were themselves context and time specific. I argued that by visualising health and the body through particular representational strategies, each image in its own way contributed to the construction of new, yet often traditional, understandings of gender, food as a modern medicine, and the emergent ideology of low-fat diets. By exploring these constructions within the context of health education and new public health policies relating to food, diet and disease, I have revealed the differing implications such images had for men and women within the postwar context of chronic disease and risk avoidance. As we shall see, these visual representations were similarly formulated in wider consumerist contexts. Unilever's Flora margarine was likewise using disease risk to not only inculcate behaviour change, but also sell health for profit. Ultimately, this chapter has emphasised the multifaceted nature of image construction within health education during this period. Yet this process, often centred on the beautiful/ugly and healthy/unhealthy dichotomy used to sell food (and exercise) as a modern medicine, had very different (visual) implications for men and women.

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Marketing Health Education: Commercialisation, Visualising Health and Flora Margarine, 1968-1992

You can tell he's a Flora man.

Today's man cares. He looks after himself. He cares about what he eats.

Flora is part of healthy eating. That's why you find more men becoming Flora men.

Their wives know they like that light, delicate taste.

And Flora is made with pure sunflower oil, so it's high in polyunsaturates.

Higher, in fact, than any other nationally available spread.

Is there a Flora man in your home?

Flora - high in polyunsaturates.
The margarine for men.

Figure 4.1: 'You can tell he's a Flora Man', advertisement (The Advertising Archives 30533995), 1978. Reproduced with kind permission of Unilever [from an original in Unilever Archives]

This Chapter will demonstrate that governmental health campaigns were not alone in constructing notions of healthiness and disease prevention in terms of beauty, gender and the body during the 1970s and 1980s. Commercial advertising had advanced particular representations of the body, closely linked to gender, to sell a variety of products throughout the twentieth century.[1] Within this context, the food industry increasingly marketed products not only in relation to gender but also to health, capitalising on wider consumer interest in diet, slimming, fitness and cosmetics.[2] Unilever was just one multinational company that benefitted from increased globalisation, improvements in communications and social changes that impacted upon personal lifestyles, such as the growth of the supermarket and increased affluence in the 1960s – both of which altered consumption practices.[3] Responding to wider changes in food consumption, Unilever launched Flora margarine in Britain in 1968 as a premium health brand.[4] From its re-launch a year later, Flora margarine advertisements focussed on the visual image of men – those typically at high risk from coronary heart disease – to market the margarine as a health product.[5] This

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[1] Sean Nixon, *Advertising Cultures: Gender, Commerce, Creativity* (London: Sage, 2003), pp. 15-36.

[2] During the interwar period, the British food industry had advertised new consumer goods for their vitamin content to extend their markets. See: Sally M. Horrocks, 'The Business of Vitamins: Nutrition Science and the Food Industry in Inter-war Britain', in *The Science and Culture of Nutrition, 1840-1940,* ed. by Harmke Kamminga and Andrew Cunningham (Amsterdam: Radopi, 1995), pp. 234-258. For more on this wider interest in dieting see: Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska, 'The Culture of the Abdomen: Obesity and Reducing in Britain, circa 1900-1939', *Journal of British Studies* 44:2 (2005), pp. 239-273; Avner Offer, 'Epidemics of Abundance: Overeating and Slimming in the USA and Britain since the 1950s', *Discussion Papers in Economic and Social History* 25 (1995), pp. 1-40; Avner Offer, 'Body Weight and Self-Control in the United States and Britain since the 1950s', *Social History of Medicine* 14:1 (2001), pp. 79-106; Anne Murcott, *The Sociology of Food and Eating: Essays on the Sociological Significance of Food* (Aldershot: Gower, 1983). For the American context see: Ann F. La Berge, 'How the Ideology of Low Fat Conquered America', *Journal of the History of Medicine and the Allied Sciences* 63:2 (2008), pp. 139-177; Peter Stearns, *Fat History: Bodies and Beauty in the Modern West* (New York: New York University Press, 1997); Harvey Levenstein, *Paradox of Plenty: A Social History of Eating in Modern America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999). For the reducing diet habits of college women in the US, see: Margaret A. Lowe, *Looking Good: College Women and Body Image, 1875–1930* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003).

[3] Geoffrey Jones, *Renewing Unilever: Transformation and Tradition* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2005), pp. 5-7.

[4] Flora Brand History, Unilever Archives, Port Sunlight, un-catalogued.

[5] For Unilever this was especially significant if medical and scientific agreement forwarded the correlation between diet and chronic disease causation. Unilever's Van den Berghs Division

marked a distinct departure for Unilever in its margarine advertising, which had hitherto almost invariably represented women – the principal food shopper.

As illustrated in Figure 4.1, by suggesting that 'Today's man cares. He looks after himself. He cares about what he eats', this Flora margarine advertisement from 1978 firmly aligned healthy eating habits with both masculinity and modernity. The central image showed a man's limbs engaged in bodily exercises. These limbs were tanned, slim and toned against a neutral background. While they elicited notions of the same ideal beautiful body that was central to governmental campaigns during this period, as shown in Chapter Three, the visual focus on the male body as beautiful rather than the female body is particularly noteworthy.[6] Feminist scholarly work has repeatedly emphasised the pressure on women to subscribe to a vast array of socially constructed bodily 'norms'.[7] Yet the cultural practices of dieting, fitness and image management worked together with an image culture that incited firstly women, but later men, to see themselves and their personal appearance as inadequate and consequently in need of improvement.[8]

The theoretical concept of the 'male gaze', as advanced by Laura Mulvey, has been rethought, in part because it overlooked the pleasures of female viewers or the male figure as the object of the gaze. Within advertising culture, men were traditionally portrayed as men 'in action', whose rigid muscular frames and active

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(responsible for edible fats production) studied the 'connection between fats in the diet and certain forms of heart disease … with a view to arriving at a Unilever policy for such products'. Unilever Archives, Port Sunlight, VBF/13/1/2/2/2/2.

[6] See Chapter Three.

[7] Sharlene Hesse-Biber, *Am I Thin Enough Yet? The Cult of Thinness and the Commercialization of Identity* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1998); Naomi Wolf, *The Beauty Myth: How Images of Beauty are Used Against Women* (London: Vintage, 1991); Roberta Seid, *Never Too Thin: Why Women are at War with their Bodies* (New York: Prentice Hall Press, 1989); Susan Bordo, *Unbearable Weight: Feminism, Western Culture and the Body* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003); Mike Featherstone, 'The Body in Consumer Culture', *Theory, Culture and Society* 1 (1982), pp. 18-33

[8] Marita Sturken and Lisa Cartwright, *Practices of Looking: An Introduction to Visual Culture* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 82.

poses countered their role as objects of the gaze.[9] As Yvonne Tasker argued, whether the masculine body was 'triumphant' or 'in crisis', it was customarily through images of muscularity that masculinity was defined.[10] Certainly, consumption played a major role in the construction, maintenance and representation of bodies with almost all products 'gendered in a practice of normative sexual dualism'.[11] And within this process, advertising played an important role in circulating dualistic gender roles and ascribing sexual identities through images centred on an iconography of masculinity and femininity. The rise of images that depicted men's bodies as sexualised, from the 1980s in particular, has complicated the dichotomy between masculinity and femininity and especially in its relationship to the 'male gaze'. The advertisement that opened this Chapter exemplified this shift. The central image of the 'up-close' male body depicted only parts of that body, divorced from the whole. This is reminiscent of the shots from *A Way of Life,* which similarly showed isolated parts of the obese body (Figures 3.12, 3.13 and 3.14) – though for very different ends. In this advertisement it was the posture of the arms and legs that implied the intact body – the body engaged in sit-ups. Tasker argued that the eroticised male body was allowable for the demonstration of qualities such as skill, endurance and bodily power (depicted through bulging muscles and sweat), to refute any suggestion of a feminising passivity as a result of being the object of the 'look'. Similarly within this advertisement, the exclusion of the face, the whole body complete with a 'discernable' personality, the same nonparticipation in the process of looking was

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[9] Stella Bruzzi discussing Yvonne Tasker's *Spectacular Bodies: Gender, Genre and Action Cinema* (London: Routledge, 1993), in Stella Bruzzi, *Men's Cinema: Masculinity and mise-en-scène in Hollywood* (Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 2013), p. 6.

[10] Yvonne Tasker, *Spectacular Bodies,* p. 109. Bruzzi, *Men's Cinema*, pp. 6-7. Sturken and Cartwright have suggested that more recently image conventions have changed in conjunction with ways of understanding such images. For them, this has altered the ways in which the operation of the gaze through images is understood, allowing for the role of the female spectator, the male as the object of the gaze and complications to simple binaries offered by a homosexual gaze.

[11] Jonathan E. Shroeder and Detlev Zwick, 'Mirrors of Masculinity: Representation and Identity in Advertising Images', *Consumption, Markets and Culture* 7:1 (2004), p. 21.

countered.[12] Thus, the gaze was limited to seeing signs inscribed *on* the body such as leanness, tanned limbs and fair body hair that connote agency.

By depicting only the bodily extremities of the male figure this advertisement raises interesting questions about how the visual component of marketing campaigns sought to sell food, diet and bodily fitness as important components of health and modernity in the postwar period. It emphasised that advertising health was closely related to a keep-fit culture concerned with looking attractive. Rather than emphasising the body at risk from disease, the male body was portrayed as fit and healthy because 'Today's [modern] man cares'. The ideal physique (and thus spectacle) of the 'perfect' male body has a dual meaning in part defined by what it is not – the 'perfect' body also implies its opposite, the imperfect, the unhealthy or decayed body.[13] In similar ways to the contemporaneous 'Look After Yourself' campaign, this advertisement constructed the healthy body as 'beautiful' yet differed in the visual tropes it used to evoke its message. Rather than emphasising the 'ugly', unattractive body to instigate behavioural (or in this case purchasing) change on the part of the consumer, Flora utilised the attractive body (or at least attractive body parts) for the same end.

Within these visualisations of the male body, Unilever established a rhetoric around modernity and the 'modern' to connect the brand with new modes of food consumption and changing understanding of the links between health, the body and disease. To this end, Unilever marketed ideas of discontinuity with the past to sell Flora as suited to 'modern needs, modern knowledge' without specifically expressing what those 'modern' traits were. Particularly in Flora's initial advertising campaigns

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[12] Steve Neale, 'Masculinity as Spectacle: Reflections on Men and Mainstream Cinema', *Screen* 24:6 (1983), pp. 2-16. Pat Kirkham and Janet Thumim (eds.), *You Tarzan: Masculinity, Movies and Men* (London: Lawrence & Wishart Ltd., 1993), pp.12-13.

[13] Kirkham and Thumim, *You Tarzan,* pp. 12-14.

(as we will see later in Figures 4.2 and 4.3), an emphasis on modern lifestyles was stressed while any definitive health claim was precluded. In similar ways to the interwar period, a discourse of modernity emerged in postwar Britain that impacted upon contemporary debates about femininity and masculinity as well as social changes ushered in by the war.[14] Much historical work conducted on discourses of modernity during the twentieth century has focused on women and the lack of 'real' emancipation achieved during the first half of the twentieth century.[15] This has included countering the overstated rhetoric of woman impinging on male spheres or replacing men within the workplace during the 1920s and again in the 1940s and 1950s. However, this was still a period of great change – for women in particular – with gender identities undergoing redefinition and new images of men and women presented to the public.[16] While this narrative has received committed scholarly attention as it impacted upon women, it is only more recently that men have been re-integrated into understandings of gender relations in more nuanced ways.[17] These studies have shown that changes (while less radical) were also occurring in the ways men were imagined, represented and discussed in terms of beauty, the body and the

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[14] For more on interwar debates see: Adrian Bingham, *Gender, Modernity and the Popular Press in Inter-War Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), pp. 47-83; Susan Kent, *The Reconstruction of Gender in Inter-War Britain* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), pp. 97-113. Birgitte Søland, *Becoming Modern: Young Women and the Reconstruction of Womanhood in the 1920s* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), pp. 46-64.

[15] See: Gail Braybon and Penny Summerfield, *Out of the Cage: Women's Experience in Two World Wars* (London: Pandora, 1987); Deirdre Beddoe, *Back to Home and Duty: Women between the Wars 1918-1939* (London: Pandora, 1989); Martin Pumphrey, 'The Flapper, the Housewife and the Making of Modernity', *Cultural Studies* 12 (1987), pp. 179-194.

[16] Bingham, *Gender, Modernity and the Popular Press*, p. 49.

[17] Sonya O. Rose, 'Temperate Heroes: Concepts of Masculinity in Second World War Britain', in Stefan Dudink, Karen Hagemann and Josh Tosh (eds.), *Masculinities in Politics and War: Gendering Modern History* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), pp.177-186; John Arnold and Sean Brady (eds.), *What is Masculinity?: Historical Dynamics from Antiquity to the Contemporary World* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011); Martin, Francis, 'The Domestication of the Male? Recent Research on Nineteenth and Twentieth-Century British Masculinity', *The Historical Journal* 45:3 (2002), pp. 637-52; Lynne Segal, *Slow Motion: Changing Masculinities, Changing Men* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2007); Joan W. Scott, 'Gender: A Useful Category for Historical Analysis', *The American Historical Review* 91:5 (1986), pp.1053-1075.

presentation of maleness (and masculinity) in everyday life. In this way, advertisements like Unilever’s Flora, revealed that contemporaries viewed the rhetoric of ‘modernity’ positively and associated it with personal and social ‘progress’ – in this case disease prevention – reflecting a period of change and arguable ‘modernity’ in gender relations as visually (rather than textually) espoused in margarine advertisements.

The copy line of the advertisement that opens this chapter (Figure 4.1) ‘You can tell he’s a Flora man’ also raises noteworthy questions not only about how bodies were constructed within food consumerism, but also how people were taught to self-identify with Flora. Therefore, what was it to be a ‘Flora man’? And why was it considered desirable? The image intended to evoke notions of desirability both in terms of potential purchasers of the Flora brand and on the part of wives and families. After all, the textual element of the advertisement implied that women were still responsible for food shopping and therefore wives know that ‘they [their husbands] like that light, delicate taste’. Thus, this advertisement established Flora as not just the brand for men, but the brand specifically for family men, while emphasising the important role women played in realising this. The closing line of the advertisement, ‘Is there a Flora man in your home?’, further emphasised this implicit linkage between the brand and the domain of the home – itself so closely associated with wives, mothers and family life. Flora as a case study therefore offers interesting points of continuity and difference in the ways health, disease, diet and the body were constructed visually in the postwar period. It dovetails with contemporary governmental campaigns, yet for very different purposes. Therefore, I suggest that while each advertisement had its own a distinct, unique visual aesthetic, they all attempted to sell nutrition and health in terms of the body, desirability and the effect of ‘looking’. Moreover, Flora’s unique position as the foremost polyunsaturated margarine brand marketed in Britain during the mid-late century, offers un-exploited avenues for close visual analysis.[18] In this chapter I again employ the methodologies of visual culture to examine how Flora advertisements constructed male bodies as agents of preventive health, individualised through a direct-address style and subject to visualisations that emphasised a pleasure in looking aimed at engaging with a female target audience. Thus, the purpose of this chapter is twofold. I will not only examine Flora margarine as a case study for exploring both how masculine notions of the body and beauty were constructed in terms of health, but also how this focus on health as a marker of distinctiveness generated an educative function for Unilever. This chapter, therefore, will argue that as health and healthy eating became increasingly important to ‘modern’ consumerism, commercial entities appropriated the health education message as a sales technique.

Furthermore, this chapter will analyse Flora’s marketing campaigns from a visual perspective, seeking to contextualise their visual messages within a wider healthy eating and bodily culture within postwar Britain. Through their employment of the male body as the central image in some (although not all) of their advertising material during the 1970s and 1980s, Flora advertisements raise important questions about the male body ‘at risk’, body image and the role of health in selling diet (and wider healthy lifestyles) during the mid-late twentieth century in Britain. While their primary aim was to sell a product, their identification of health as the central means to do so makes Unilever’s Flora a particularly noteworthy example of how certain food

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[18] Flora was the first polyunsaturated margarine brand launched in Britain and building upon Unilever’s existing domination of the edible fats industry in the UK (in part through its very successful merger with Van den Berghs and Jurgen) it gained considerable market share by the end of the 1970s. Market segmentation allowed Unilever to market Flora with a range of functional and emotional choices. For example Blue Band conveyed notions of ‘mothercare’, while Flora touched on fears of heart disease. See: Geoffrey Jones, *Renewing Unilever: Transformation and Tradition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), pp. 123-125.

products were being linked to health at the same time as many others were being linked to ill health. By analysing the history of one particular, socio-culturally contingent construction of masculinity – the study of men as gendered bodies – through Flora advertising campaigns, this chapter will demonstrate how the gendered body, diet and health education were becoming increasingly interlinked. Certainly, it was the relationship with heart disease prevention that secured the inclusion of men (perceived most at-risk from CHD) as advertising targets.[19] By visually analysing the numerous advertisement campaigns used to increase Flora's market share from its nationwide launch in 1968 until 1992, the intersection between how disease risk, the body and gender norms were imagined in health education terms by Unilever is revealed.[20]

Divided largely chronologically, I analyse the campaigning impetus of Flora, in three main respects. The first analyses Flora advertisements during its initial launch stage in Bolton and Brighton prior to its extension nationwide in 1968. It will largely focus on the use of health claims – particularly polyunsaturated fats – as a way of establishing market share during this economically competitive period. I will consider these claims through a close analysis of the visual components of Flora's advertising campaigns, examining how they visually associate particular lifestyles with health and longevity. I will also consider how this visuality is coded with entrenched societal

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[19] As outlined in Chapter Three, mortality rates from coronary heart disease grew exponentially during the 1960s with the greatest number of deaths occurring in men. The Framingham Heart Study, together with the work of Richard Doll and Austin Bradford-Hill on smoking and lung cancer at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, helped to change the focus of epidemiology and public health from epidemic diseases to chronic conditions during the 1950s and 1960s. For more on this development and its impact on public health see: Virginia Berridge, Martin Gorsky and Alex Mold, *Public Health in History* (Maidenhead: Open Univeristy Press, McGraw Hill, 2011), pp. 198-199 and Berridge, *Marketing Health*, pp. 23-80.

[20] In 1992 Flora's 'Blooming Generation' campaign was replaced to broaden the definition and relevance of Flora care with advertising moving away from using the body itself as a sales tool and instead focussed on lifestyle and fitness. Flora as a brand was also moving away from being a margarine product alone and instead was launching cheeses, dressings and oil products under the Flora name. Flora Brand History, Unilever Archives, Port Sunlight, un-catalogued.

norms regarding women, the family and notions of the healthy body. Here, Flora advertisements represent another important way in which these norms were disseminated in society, drawing parallels with similar governmental efforts. The second section will focus on the way in which Flora advertisements identified the individual as both consumer and agent of change. It will analyse poster advertisements from the 1970s and 1980s to demonstrate how Flora built upon the established visual language of health, risk and individual responsibility to market itself as a health brand. The final section of this chapter will examine one particular marketing campaign for Flora margarine in detail. This specific campaign used male bodies as visual tools for targeting men as a central market for this brand, yet retained the role of the woman as the primary food purchaser interested in safeguarding her family's health. I will argue that the visual imagery utilised in these advertisements constructed masculinity and the male body in ways closely associated with culturally contingent notions of beauty, attractiveness and the contemporary emergence of the '*to-be-looked-at-ness*' of the male body. I will examine these advertisements in terms of modernity and how certain male bodies were now coded as 'modern' in ways similar to that in contemporary governmental counterparts. By coding the body again in terms of gender, bodily attractiveness and the merits of healthiness, Unilever's Flora margarine brand operated within a pre-established consumer culture regarding health.

Educating Flora: Re-Envisioning the Marketing of Margarine

Much academic work that used margarine as an analytical tool tended to focus either on the class implications of diets high in margarine prior to the Second World War, the problem of deficiency diseases in the early to mid-century, or on the industrial aspects of its production and its associated impact on diversification and market share.[21] Histories of industrial regulation also identified margarine as a unique product in the area of food legislation.[22] However, little scholarly work has engaged with the role of margarine in constructing the healthy consumer in the postwar period. Frances Steel, in relation to butter and the diet-heart disease link in New Zealand, has examined the social positioning of margarine as it was identified as a nutritionally endorsed butter substitute.[23] She explored a variety of political and social responses to this shift, including those of government, nutritional organisations, the dairy industry, women responsible for feeding coronary disease sufferers and butter consumers. However, her work stopped short of analysing the role of marketing, or product advertising in the dissemination of populist information regarding butter, polyunsaturated margarine and heart disease.[24] Conversely, I argue that central to the process of constructing a health conscious consumer was the content and form of visual health advertising. Just as governmental campaigns hardly acted in isolation in advancing notions of healthiness and healthy living through visual foci, health was undergoing commoditisation in terms of disease prevention during this period with both government and industry acting as important torch bearers.

Thus, when considering the position of the food industry in relation to health and product diversification, Unilever, as Europe's foremost producer of margarine, provides a unique perspective on the development of health brands in postwar Britain.

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[21] Alysa Levene, 'The Meanings of Margarine in England: Class: Consumption and Material Culture from 1918 to 1953', *Contemporary British History* (2014), pp. 145-165; Anne Hardy, 'Rickets and the Rest: Diet and the Infectious Children's Diseases, 1850-1914', *Social History of Medicine* 5:3 (1992), pp. 389-412; John Singleton and Paul L. Robertson, 'Britain, Butter and European Integration 1957-1964', *The Economic History Review* 50:2 (1997), pp. 327-347;

[22] Ruth Dupre, 'If It's Yellow, It Must Be Butter: Margarine Regulation in North America since 1866', *The Journal of Economic History* 59:2 (1999), pp. 353-371; Richard A. Ball and J. Robert Lilly, 'The Menace of Margarine: The Rise and Fall of a Social Problem', *Social Problems* 29: 5 (1982), pp. 488-498.

[23] Frances Steel, 'The Source of Our Wealth, Yet Adverse to Our Health? Butter and the Diet-Heart Link in New Zealand to c.1990', *Social History of Medicine* 18:3 (2005), pp. 475-493.

[24] Steel, 'The Source of Our Wealth, Yet Adverse to Our Health?', pp. 475-493.

As the first polyunsaturated margarine brand marketed in Britain (as well as the most successful in sales terms), Unilever altered previously entrenched modes of advertising for edible fats on an international scale.[25] Another result of the multinational's preoccupation with diversifying its margarine business as a result of static market conditions in the late 1950s and early 1960s (as outlined in Chapter Two), Unilever identified health as a key factor that could be exploited to establish margarine as a practical alternative to butter.[26] Indeed, it was this inherent competitiveness with the strong butter industry and its political lobby that prompted Unilever to reposition its margarine interests towards health as a viable means of ensuring consumers changed their brand loyalty in Unilever's favour.[27] Moreover, Unilever established Flora as not just a brand but a type of 'health expert' that 'made Flora advice you'll take on board'.[28] This chapter will demonstrate how this establishment was visually constructed.

Certainly, what set Flora apart from its competitors in this instance was Unilever's apparent commitment to fulfilling a health education function. This dedication was realised in pragmatic terms with the establishment in 1971 of the Flora Information Service, which provided information about heart disease and dietary fats to the public. From the outset, Flora was coded as both a health promoting product and an important component of Unilever's strategy for marketing Flora was 'to enlighten ... the general public as to the facts regarding dietary fats and heart disease'.[29] In this respect, the establishment of this Information Service reflected a wider evolution of infrastructure within multinational companies associated with

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[25] Jones, *Renewing Unilever*, pp. 123-125. Flora (also known as Becel in much of continental Europe) was launched on a transnational basis throughout the 1960s and 1970s.
[26] Wilson, *Unilever, 1945-1965*, p.162. Also see Chapter Two.
[27] 'The Evolution of Margarine', Unilever Archives, Port Sunlight, UNI 1974/1.
[28] Anon, 'Fats, Heart Disease and Unilever', Unilever Archives, Port Sunlight, A4 5350.
[29] 'Formulating Unilever Policy', Unilever Archives, Port Sunlight, A4 5350.

corporate social responsibility. While social responsibility was beginning to feature on the agenda of large corporations during the interwar period from the 1960s it was routinely incorporated into brand strategies.[30] As Archie B. Carroll explained, public opinion polling throughout the 1970s revealed that many respondents believed that businesses had a moral obligation to help 'achieve … social progress'.[31] In this respect corporate commitments to demonstrating socially responsible behaviour were increasingly codified within businesses at policy and strategy level. While these built on nineteenth century concepts of philanthropy and social morality, with an emphasis on community impact and education, such initiatives were also important in the creation of a consumer culture around health, disease and consumer action.

As Chapter Two and Three demonstrated, postwar consumer culture has attracted considerable scholarly attention.[32] Within this context, much emphasis has been placed on the significance of consumer affluence during the 1950s and 1960s.[33] While some historians have emphasised how the rapid shift from austerity to affluence resulted in a 'cultural explosion', others have instead stressed the importance of debates around consumption for the development of the postwar

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[30] Archie B. Carroll, 'Corporate Social Responsibility: Evolution of a Definitional Construct', *Business and Society* 38:3 (1999), pp. 268-295. The rise of corporate social responsibility within multinational corporations was tied to a complex combination of issues including sustainability, environmental impact and philanthropy.

[31] Carroll, 'Corporate Social Responsibility', pp. 274-275.

[32] Matthew Hilton, *Consumerism in Twentieth Century Britain: the search for a historical movement* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Matthew Hilton, 'The Female Consumer and the Politics of Consumption in Twentieth Century Britain', *The Historical Journal* 45:1 (2002), pp. 103-128. Frank Trentmann (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Consumption* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2012); Frank Trentmann, *Free Trade Nation: Commerce, Consumption and Civil Society in Modern Britain* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2003).

[33] Lawrence Black and Hugh Pemberton, *An Affluent Society? Britain's Post-War 'Golden Age' Revisited* (Aldershot, Hampshire and Burlington, VA: Ashgate, 2004); Mike Savage, 'Affluence and Social Change in the Making of Technocratic Middle-Class Identities: Britain, 1939-55', *Contemporary British History* 22:4 (2008), p. 457-476; Avner Offer, *The Challenge of Affluence: Well being and Self Control in the United States and Britain Since 1950* (Oxford, 2006); Dominic Sandbrook, *Never Had It so Good: A History of Britain from Suez to the Beatles* (London, 2005).

political landscape as a whole.[34] In particular, Lawrence Black has illustrated how Labour failed to deal with new found levels of prosperity in postwar Britain, which ensured it remained uncertain and fragmented about popular culture more generally.[35] Matthew Hilton argued that this struggle for political groups (more widely) to integrate the changed role of consumption in modern life into their agenda facilitated the emergence of an organised consumerism that gave voice to consumers on a variety of ethical and political concerns.[36]

While such political visions of consumption and the issue of consumer protection feature widely in the extant literature, the role of advertising remains largely overlooked. Taking the lead from Stefan Schwarzkopf, I will demonstrate that advertising as an important component of postwar culture is too often neglected in the historical narrative.[37] But rather than advocating for its role within the politicisation of consumption alone, I use advertisements to locate postwar culture within the equally overlooked yet historically important aspects of this culture that rely on visual images within postwar Britain. As Erving Goffman has suggested advertising images portrayed gender identities by providing a 'hyper-ritualized' snapshot of everyday gender relationships through body language, gestures, glances amongst others.[38] Similarly, Roberta Sassatelli has persuasively argued that advertising performs an

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[34] See: Arthur Marwick, *The Sixties: Cultural Revolution in Britain, France, Italy and the United States, c. 1958-1974* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998); Peter Hennessey, *Having It so Good: Britain in the Fifties* (London: Penguin, 2007); Anne Massey, *The Independent Group: Modernism and Mass Culture in Britain, 1945-59* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995).

[35] Lawrence Black, *The Political Culture of the Left in Affluent Britain, 1951-1964* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2003).

[36] Matthew Hilton, 'Consumer Politics in Post-war Britain', in *The Politics of Consumption: Material Culture and Citizenship in Europe and America*, ed. by Martin Daunton and Matthew Hilton (Oxford: Berg, 2001), pp. 241-259. For example, consumers within the NHS gained a political active voice was through the development of patient-consumer groups. For more see: Alex Mold, 'Patient Groups and the Construction of the Patient Consumer in Britain: An Historical Overview', *Journal of Social Policy* 39:4 (2010), pp. 505-521; Alex Mold, 'Making the Patient Consumer in Margaret Thatcher's Britain', *History Journal* 54:2 (2011), pp. 509-528; Alex Mold, 'Patients' Rights and the National Health Service in Britain, 1960s-1980s', *American Journal of Public Health* 102:11 (2012), pp. 2030-2038.

[37] Stefan Schwarzkopf, 'They do it with Mirrors: Advertising and British Cold War Consumer Politics', *Contemporary British History* 19:2 (2005), pp. 133-150.

[38] Erving Goffman, *Gender Advertisements* (London: Macmillan, 1979), p. 84.

ideological function, a complex politics of representation that exploits numerous social identities.[39] In doing so advertisements can both reproduce dominant socio-cultural differences and support new social trends.[40] Within a postwar US context, men were still often represented as taller, stronger, dominant social actors, while women were smaller, humbler and submissive.[41] Flora's campaigning focus on the male body conveyed similar representational strategies with a visual focus on taut, lean muscular bodies occasionally contrasted with slender, shorter women (see: Figure 4.10).[42] In conveying information to potential purchasers in this way, such images indicated the proper gender specific way of desiring and using products and helped to stabilise hierarchical differences between men and women. The inherent centrality of images to the very nature of advertising makes it a fruitful source for investigating the constructs and codes of representation at work in postwar consumer culture. While Flora is just one example, a close-analysis of the images it employed to create a brand aesthetic reveals the changing marketing agendas of Unilever. These images of diet and health helped to construct the male body as an agent of social and economic change with the pursuit of healthiness closely tied to an aestheticisation of modern lifestyles.

Femininity, Feminism and the Spaces of the Consumption

Building upon a pre-existing rhetoric of naturalness and goodness (that Unilever had already applied to its Blue Band and Summer County brands), Flora advertising

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[39] Roberta Sassatelli, *Consumer Culture: History, Theory and Politics* (London: Sage Publications, 2007), p. 133-136.

[40] Sassatelli, *Consumer Culture*, p. 133.

[41] Sassatelli, *Consumer Culture*, p. 134

[42] In particular, see the 'Say it with Flora' (Figure 4.10) campaign from the mid-1980s. This was accompanied by the TV advertisement themes of 'Isn't it time you had a new man in your life?' and 'Isn't it time to change your husband?' with an emphasis on women switching brands to give their husbands Flora, who consequently 'become' Flora men with the implication that they in some way *physically* change. Flora Brand History, Unilever Archives, Port Sunlight, un-catalogued.

emphasised its benefits not only in similar generalist terms, but also specifically in relation to 'its role in the maintenance of heart health'.[43] As a result of this overt marketing strategy, focused on linking the brand closely with coronary heart disease prevention, Unilever aimed at persuading more men, who were the primary sufferers of coronary heart disease at this time, to eat Flora as an active preventative practice.[44] Thus the visual focus on men in the advertising output for Flora reflected this objective and in doing so represented an important shift towards the depiction and construction of male bodies as a marketing tool. This is particularly noteworthy due to the aforementioned long tradition of both butter and butter substitutes directing the bulk of their advertising toward the purchasing power of women as homemakers.[45]

Traditionally, the advertising of food focused on the private space of consumption. Many of Unilever's advertisements for other margarine brands in the 1950s such as Stork and Blue Band (see Chapter Two) had visually espoused the merits of domestic conventionality, conveying men, women and children in traditional gender roles and displaying the pleasure of communal eating habits.[46] Domestic environments, in which daily consumption of material and cultural goods took place, were heavily gendered.[47] While household practices such as food consumption have been conventionally singled out as sites of gendered power relations, Sassatelli has suggested that these are still contextual alongside other,

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[43] Flora Brand History, Unilever Archives, Port Sunlight, un-catalogued. I have not included an analysis of Summer County in this thesis because it is a butter-margarine blend and not a margarine marketed for its value-added component. It advertised its 'natural' qualities largely in relation to its butter content.

[44] Anon, 'Fats, Heart Disease and Unilever: Putting the Policy into Practice', Port Sunlight, A4 5350, 1964.

[45] See Chapter Two in relation to Blue Band and Stork in particular.

[46] See Chapter Two for a detailed analysis of gendered household norms and the position of women within the visual construction of food in Unilever margarine advertising during in the immediate postwar period.

[47] Sassatelli, *Consumer Culture*, p. 170.

related routines.[48] Joanna Bourke argued that full-time housewifery provided women with an important power base, as husbands were just as dependent on female domestic skills as women were on male earnings.[49] While Bourke's study focused on the period prior to the First World War, there remained important continuities with the postwar period. Elizabeth Roberts has emphasised the important role women played in raising family living standards in conjunction with the high status in family and community that women could derive in making ends meet.[50] Therefore, their ability to manage household finances was a key element in their perceived success as household managers. Thus, when marketing to women in overt, visual ways, Unilever was contributing to the societal importance placed on women as homemakers. Their repeated visual presence exposed their power as food purchasers and their role in making food choices. Unilever's decision to display male bodies to advertise Flora represented a complex and multifaceted departure. Close visual and textual analysis of the advertisements themselves, revealed that rather than re-examining the social position of men in relation to household tasks, these advertisements reasserted the enduring importance of women to the marketing dynamic of margarine in the postwar period.

Throughout the twentieth century, women in domestic settings have been identified as key agents in maintaining familial health.[51] By the 1970s and 1980s, this

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[48] Sassatelli, *Consumer Culture*, p. 171.

[49] See Joanna Bourke, 'Housewifery in Working-Class England 1860-1914', *Past and Present* 124 (1994).

[50] Elizabeth Roberts, *Women and Families: An Oral History, 1940-1970* (Oxford: Blackwell: 1997).

[51] Throughout the twentieth century, the British government identified women as responsible for health within the domain of the home. In particular, wartime campaigns focussed on welfare food established mothers as the responsible agent for the maintenance of infant and child health (see Chapter One for wartime campaigns and Chapter Two for the immediate postwar period). Similarly, Hilary Marland has examined motherhood in relation to health since the late nineteenth century. See: Hilary Marland, *Health and Girlhood in Britain, 1874-1920* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013); Marijke Gijswijt-Hofstra and Hilary Marland, *Cultures of Child Health in Britain and the Netherlands in the Twentieth Century* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2003); Hilary Marland and Vicky Long, 'From Danger and Motherhood to Health and Beauty: Health Advice for the Factory Girl in Early Twentieth-Century

responsibility involved transferring health education centred on risk, behavioural change and individual responsibility to shopping and eating habits. Thus, it is important to analyse Unilever's 'Flora Man' advertising campaign in light of contemporaneous gender norms. As Sean Nixon's work on market research and women in postwar Britain elucidated, throughout the 1950s and 1960s, women were the main purchasers of household food products and this changed little in the following decades.[52] Therefore, Unilever's advertising emphasis on the masculine as its central sales technique, and their explicit decision to visually associate their product with men, reveals important nuances in both the perceptions and realities of Flora's consumer base and exposes a complicated relationship between women as purchasers, men as consumers and product advertisers as potential mediators of pre-assigned and normative gendered behaviours.

The rise of second-wave feminism in particular instigated a re-interpretation of gender roles as inscribed in large-scale advertising campaigns. US men's magazines in the 1970s and 1980s (such as *GQ* and *Esquire*) identified feminism as a central factor in the growth of new forms of journalism for men focusing on style, beauty and attractiveness. The corresponding British magazine industry was slow to identify feminism as having any formative influence on the shifting targets of male magazine purchasers and was much slower to acknowledge the role of feminism in creating new genres for men's journalism.[53] Rather, within the wider commercial sphere, Frank Mort identified the search for new markets in late twentieth century Britain as intimately bound to the formation of new masculine identities and styles of

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Britain', *Twentieth Century British History* 20:4 (2009), pp. 454-481; Valerie, Fildes, Lara Marks and Hilary Marland, *Women and Children First: International Maternal and Child Welfare, 1870-1945* (London: Routledge, 1992).

[52] Sean Nixon, 'Understanding the Ordinary Housewife: Advertising, Market Research and Mass Consumption in Britain 1948-67', *Journal of Cultural Economy* 2:1 (2009), pp. 301-323.

[53] Frank Mort, *Cultures of Consumption: Masculinities and Social Space in Late Twentieth-Century Britain* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996), pp. 43-44.

life.[54] Sean Nixon too has cited the centrality of the advertising industry to the consolidation of a new set of masculine identities shaped through consumerism.[55] Both the 'new man' and the 'new lad' were characterised in terms of their interaction with previously untapped consumer pleasures that had been hitherto marked as socially dubious. While Mort focussed on the marketing strategies of the British fashion press, his work identified the ways in which men's identities were performed in broader networks of social life.[56] Within this context of a burgeoning men's magazine culture, purchasing decisions were both implicitly and explicitly linked to decisions made about the self. Bodily appearance was a target in governing everyday life by a sharp self-consciousness.[57]

Therefore, it was not only within the realm of product advertising that men and masculine identities were constructed in terms of appearance and the aesthetics of looking good. Men's magazines were complicit in creating a sense of collective masculinity available for public discussion. As Mort argued, '[i]t was the rituals of consumption which bridged the individual and the collective' and it is this concept of a collective yet individualised masculinity, that began to pervade product advertising culture at the same time. By representing certain modes of behaviour – dress, hygiene, hair and appearance – as a component of a collective change, centred on ideas of what was 'in fashion', men's magazines contributed to the enlistment of the individual to

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[54] Mort, *Cultures of Consumption*, p. 44.

[55] Sean Nixon, 'Re-signifying Masculinity, from 'new man' to 'new lad' in British Cultural Studies', in British Cultural Studies, ed. by David Morley and Kevin Robin (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 373-386.

[56] Frank Mort and Peter Thompson, 'Retailing, Commercial Culture and Masculinity in 1950s Britain: The Case of Montague Burton, the "Tailor of Taste"', History Workshop 38 (1994), pp. 106-127; Mort, *Cultures of Consumption*, p. 44-45; Frank Mort, 'Paths to Mass Consumption: Britain and the USA since 1945', in *Buy This Book: Studies in advertising and consumption*, ed. by Mica Nava, Andrew Blake, Iain MacRury and Barry Richards (London: Routledge, 1997). See also: Sean Nixon, 'Advertising Executives as Modern Men: Masculinity and the UK Advertising Industry in the 1980s', in *Buy This Book: Studies in advertising and consumption*, ed. by Mica Nava, Andrew Blake, Iain MacRury and Barry Richards (London: Routledge, 1997).

[57] Mort, *Cultures of Consumption*, p. 77.

change their behaviours within a social collective. As a health product Flora, in the 1970s, at least attempted to perform a similar ritual in terms of constructing a health consciousness closely related to socially contingent ideals of male beauty, personal appearance and bodily ideals produced through individual commitments to behavioural change.[58]

As Chapter Two has shown, during the postwar period in particular, those public health campaigns produced at the behest of both government and private industry promulgated a visual language around ideas of health and beauty. The emergence of sedentary lifestyles and convenient and speedy methods of cooking and eating coincided with a proliferation of images of beautiful bodies.[59] As Zweiniger-Bargielowska has delineated, new body norms were created through popular self-help literature and popularised in the daily press from the end of the Victorian Era to the outbreak of the Second World War.[60] These had different implications for men and women and the construction of the modern male body was closely aligned to debates around racial fitness and active citizenship.[61] While the female body was similarly constructed around such debates, the modern nation state required men and women to conform to notions of a physically efficient and disciplined gendered citizen in different ways.[62] During the interwar period, men's bodies were the first to be subjected to a physical culture movement centred on the beautiful male body, which was identified with a hegemonic masculinity and defined against the emaciated urban poor, the effeminate homosexual and those unfit for military service.[63] Thus in this

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[58] Mort, *Cultures of Consumption*, p. 77.

[59] For the pre-history of this post-war development see: Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska, *Managing the Body: Beauty, Health and Fitness in Britain, 1880-1939* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

[60] Zweiniger-Bargielowska, *Managing the Body*, p. 1.

[61] Zweiniger-Bargielowska, *Managing the Body*, p. 1.

[62] See: George L. Mosse, *The Image of Man: The creation of modern masculinity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996); Sander Gilman, *Making the Body Beautiful: A Cultural History of Aesthetic Surgery* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), pp. 206-236.

[63] Zweiniger-Bargielowska, *Managing the Body*, p. 11.

period, the physical appearance of the male body was closely linked with notions of 'able-bodiedness'. Yet as the century progressed and concerns about racial fitness lost their political and cultural currency (especially with rising living standards, welfare reforms and declining mortality), male bodies were no longer defined solely in terms of the 'social body'. In the postwar period, body management was associated with disease prevention as a way of achieving the ideal body based on dietary reform, athletic exercise, exposure of the skin to sun and clean air, and personal cleanliness, amongst others.[64] Thus the awareness of the close link between diet, lifestyle and health, which had typified epidemiological public health in the postwar period, was not new within twentieth century public health but was instead appropriating a new disease prevention focus.

Masculinity, the Gaze and Issues of Representation

During the late 1970s and 1980s, there was the emergence of what could be termed the female gaze or female spectatorship.[65] Constructed in similar ways to the 'male gaze', the retronym of the female gaze finds pleasure in looking at the male and in turn creates the notion of the '*to-be-looked-at-ness*' of the male body. While Laura Mulvey claimed that the 'male gaze' is also the female gaze, in that women look at

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[64] Zweiniger-Bargielowska, *Managing the Body*, p. 151-192.

[65] Laura Mulvey, 'Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema', in *Visual and Other Pleasures*, ed. by Laura Mulvey (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), pp.14-30. Within the area of film criticism feminist debates about the 'male gaze' were met with feminist responses to the possible meanings of spectatorship for women. Psychoanalytical models focussed on the textual spectator (the ways in which the film constructs sexual difference for its narrative and characters) rather than the empirical spectator (the women in the audience). Cultural Studies similarly took up this investigation, applying an ethnographic methodology to explore the long-standing concern with audiences, viewing and cultural consumption. See: Barbara Creed, 'Medusa in the Land of Oz: The Female Spectator in Australia', *Camera Obscura* 7:2-3 (1989), pp. 53-67; Janet Bergstrom and Mary Anne Doane, 'The Female Spectator: Contexts and Directions', *Camera Obscura* 7:2-3 (1989), pp. 5-27; Laura Mulvey, 'British Feminist Film Theory's Female Spectators: Presence and Absence', *Camera Obscura* 7:2-3 (1989), pp. 68-81; Rosemary Betterton, 'How do Women Look? The Female Nude in the work of Suzanne Valadon', *Feminist Review* 19 (1985), pp. 3-24. For a concise summation of the development of a theoretical understanding of the female spectator in the 1980s see: Jackie Stacey, *Star Gazing: Hollywood Cinema and Female Spectatorship* (Oxford and New York: Routledge, 1994), pp. 22-24.

themselves through the eyes of men because they readily adopt the narrative of patriarchy, since the 1980s others have argued for the widening of feminist and cultural studies to consider the possible meanings of spectatorship for women.[66] The idea that women can also derive pleasure from looking at men has been contentious. Understandings of the 'male gaze', and the narrative pleasures gained from it, are centred on two contradictory processes: the objectification of the image and the identification with it. Thus, by drawing on the work of Jacques Lacan and the identification of the self as key in constructing codes of looking and awareness of being looked at, Mulvey argued that the pleasure and despair created between the image and the self image has facilitated the emergence of a voyeuristic 'male gaze'. Whilst acknowledging the significant differences between interpretations of the female spectator within feminist film theory and ethnographical cultural studies, Jackie Stacey maintained that Mulvey's original attack on the 'male gaze' prompted debates on the question of the female spectator within analyses of visual media.[67] Lisa Cartwright has explored the development of what she terms 'the healthy gaze' in relation to the burgeoning, mass-technology of the X-ray in the mid-twentieth century.[68] The management of this new technology involved transforming the X-ray from an image of death to a symbol of public health. In doing so, Cartwright argued, it rendered public the voyeuristic gaze of the male radiologist and 'reencoded the private body as a public space that might be traversed by anyone – even women technologists'.[69] She furthered that as sexualised and racialised criterions of beauty and health moved from the surface of the body to interior components, a new cultural

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[66] Roberta Sassatelli, 'Interview with Laura Mulvey: Gender, Gaze and Technology in Film Culture', *Theory, Culture and Society* 28:5 (2011), pp. 123-143.

[67] Stacey, *Star Gazing*, pp. 23-24.

[68] Lisa Cartwright, *Screening the Body: Tracing Medicine's Visual Culture* (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), pp. 154-159.

[69] Cartwright, *Screening the Body*, p. 154.

catalogue of identity and difference emerged.[70] Cartwright emphasised the interiority of the gaze associated with new visualising technologies. In contrast, the inscriptions of codes of health and beauty ideals in terms of chronic disease prevention were still performed on the exposed body encased in skin. I argue that this was particularly true for images aimed at eliciting behavioural change in the realm of food and diet. After all, the body was an important site upon which modes of health conduct were exacted and time and again images portrayed the body either cooperating with the contemporary socially contingent health advice or the dangers of non-compliance. These images exposed the ways in which visualisations of the body and visualisations of health were (and still are) inextricably interlinked. Rendering healthiness in terms of specific and visually identifiable markers on the body (for example slimness, fitness, toned muscles) underscored the message that the body was the key matrix in health prevention processes.

'Your Health and the Food You Eat': Flora and the Rise of the Health Claim in 1960s Britain

> Modern needs, modern knowledge, make for a more intelligent approach to eating. The trend now, is to lighter, healthier, better-balanced foods – and to new ideas like Flora, the new margarine, blended from light, golden vegetable oils.[71]

Such was the message of Flora's launch advertisement campaign in 1964. The focus in this copy-line on modernity, lightness and health revealed that from the outset Unilever identified health as a key element in establishing its unique selling point. By doing so Unilever closely linked the tenets of healthy lifestyles, risk avoidance and personal behaviour change to a specific type of food consumption. By encouraging potential purchasers to consume a product with identifiable health benefits –

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[70] Cartwright, *Screening the Body*, pp. 154-155.

[71] Quote from Figure 4.2: 'For the Lighter, healthier way you want to eat today – it's Flora, the new margarine', advertisement (Unilever Archives, MD/AL 107/1 – B10309), September 1964.

vegetable-based, polyunsaturated fats – Flora altered the relationship between edible fats and the diet-heart disease link. Historians of public health and food, academic nutritionists and food policy experts have all identified this appropriation of health by the food industry as an important factor in the food economy in the twentieth century.[72] In particular, they have noted the accelerated rise of functional foods or 'nutraceuticals' in the marketplace since the 1980s.[73] Such functional foods aimed to maintain health and create conditions beneficial to reducing the risk of 'diseases of affluence'. But the development of food products that delivered health benefits and informed consumers on how food consumption could help prevent disease were formulated long before the manufacture of food products with specific health inducing additives such as plant sterols or omega-3. While much academic work on the rise of health and food functionality has concentrated on the United States, parallels are evident in the British context. As Chapter One has demonstrated, the linking of food and health was nothing fundamentally new in the postwar period, yet what remained innovative about Flora was its focus on chronicity, not deficiency, disease prevention and its identification of polyunsaturates as the single health-inducing ingredient.[74] In this respect, Flora advertising presented consumers with

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[72] Marion Nestle, *Food Politics: How the Food Industry Influences Nutrition and Health* (Berkeley and London: University of California Press, 2002); Tim Lang and Michael Heasman, *Food Wars: The Global Battle for Mouths, Minds and Markets* (London and Sterling, VA: Earthscan, 2004); Michael Heasman and Julian Mellentin, *The Functional Foods Revolution: Health People, Healthy Profits?* (London and Sterling, VA: Earthscan, 2001); Gyorgy Scrinis, 'Functional foods or functionally marketed foods? A critique of, and alternatives to, the category of 'functional foods', *Public Health Nutrition* 11:5 (2008), pp. 541-545.

[73] For academic work focussed on particular food products see: Robert Fitzsimmons, 'Oh What Those Oats Can Do. Quaker Oats, the Food and Drug Administration, and the Market Value of Scientific Evidence 1984-2010', *Comprehensive Review in Food Science and Food Safety* 11 (2012), pp. 56-99; Gyorgy Scrinis, 'Nutritionism and Functional Foods', in *The Philosophy of Food*, ed. by David Kaplan (Berkeley CA: University of California, 2012), pp. 269-291.

[74] In particular, foods high in certain vitamins and minerals were identified as important (and marketed as such) since the early twentieth century. Similarly, vitamin supplementation was a successful and dynamic market in the decades prior to the Second World War. See: Apple, *Vitamania: Vitamins in American Culture* (New Brunswick NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1996); Harmke Kamminga, '"Axes to Grind": popularising the science of vitamins, 1920s and 1930s', in *Food, Science, Policy and*

‘scientific’ details about the possible links between diet and heart disease, representing one way in which epidemiologically-focused understandings of risk and individual responsibility segued from the laboratory and into the household.

The shift by the food industry towards marketing food products according to their understood health benefits in preventing chronic disease was a distinctly postwar development.[75] Initially, this repositioning – emphasising a functional element of food – largely involved using what would become known as health claims to sell conventional foods, but later manufacturers developed specific ‘functional’ foods, created to be marketed for their health benefits alone.[76] Following the example of US margarine manufacturers, who had developed a range of new margarines high in polyunsaturated fats, Unilever committed itself to the creation, manufacture and marketing of a margarine brand with a ‘basic consumer claim that is sufficiently different from the claims generally in use for standard and super [margarine] brands’.[77] Therefore, from the outset, the Flora brand continually, visually and textually portrayed the goodness and health benefits of its product, especially its role in the maintenance of heart health. Focusing on health as its new consumer claim, the company closely linked the launch of Flora in Britain with the wider international development of health claims.[78]

Regulation in the Twentieth Century: International and Comparative Perspectives, ed. by David F. Smith and Jim Philips (London: Routledge, 2000), pp. 83-100.

[75] A notable exception is the case of ‘Asian rickets’ since the 1960s with widespread debates about the fortification of certain foods eaten by Asian communities. But this is an atypical example as it was constructed as disease that affected ethnic minority populations, especially Southeast Asian communities and not the majority population. See: Roberta Bivins, ‘“The English Disease” or “Asian Rickets’? The Medical Response to Postcolonial Immigration’, *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, 81:3 (2007), pp. 533-568; Roberta Bivins, ‘Coming ‘Home’ to (post)Colonial Medicine: Treating Tropical Bodies in Post-War Britain’, *Social History of Medicine* 26:1 (2013), pp. 1-20. Conversely, issues of chronic heart disease and diabetes in particular were framed as diseases that potentially affected everyone and as such the food industry identified them as new ways of marketing food within a wider health and keeping fit nexus.

[76] For example see: Fitzsimmons, ‘Oh What Those Oats Can Do.’, pp. 56-99.

[77] Anon, ‘Fats, Heart Disease and Unilever’, Unilever Archives, Port Sunlight, A4 5350.

[78] While the term ‘functional foods’ was not created until the 1980s, proto-functional foods emerged at the same time as scientific links between diet and disease causation gained increased prominence.

The linkage of Flora with a specific health claim was incorporated into its visual advertising material from its re-launch in late 1969.[79] Unilever's rationale for doing so was made plain in an announcement in the *Van den Berghs and Jurgen News* (a company magazine distributed in-house to all employees within their British business) in June 1971, with the company declaring that 'there is now so much evidence to support the theory that dietary fats are important in heart diseases, that the general public should know more about it'.[80] This statement revealed the company's explicit objective to position themselves as public health educators.[81] Unilever had already adopted a scientific research agenda during the 1950s and its Research Laboratory at Vlaardingen in the Netherlands 'was amongst the pioneers in investigating the connections between atherosclerosis, the cholesterol level in the blood, and polyunsaturates'.[82] The result of this research was the development of Becel (Flora), which it claimed 'can do everything the consumer asks of butter … [and] can also meet requirements that butter cannot'.[83] To this end, Unilever developed a policy for launching Flora to 'publicise the connection between dietary

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Perhaps the earliest product was Yakult in Japan, which was marketed from 1955. For a brief introduction to the development of functional foods from the 1950s see: Michael Heasman and Julian Mellentin, *The Functional Foods Revolution: Healthy people, healthy profits?* (London and Sterling, VA: Earthscan, 2001), pp. 3-33.

[79] It was relaunched nationally after its test phase and it altered its advertising to more directly emphasise its health claim.

[80] Anon, *Van den Berghs and Jurgen News*, No.10, June 1971, p. 1.

[81] Little historical research has been conducted on the role of industry in relation to health education in postwar Britain. Virginia Berridge and Penny Starns have examined the tobacco industry response to the rise and fall of the 'safer smoker' in the 1960s and 1970s through a case study of the Wills tobacco company. See Berridge and Penny Starns, 'The 'invisible industrialist' and public health: The rise and fall of 'safer smoking' in the 1970s', in *Medicine, the Market and the Mass Media: Producing health in the twentieth century*, ed. by Virginia Berridge and Kelly Loughlin (Oxford and New York: Routledge, 2005), pp. 172-191. For the US context see: Stanton A. Glantz, John Slade, Lisa A. Bero, Peter Hanauer and Deborah E. Barnes, *The Cigarette Papers* (Berkeley: California Univeristy Press, 1996).

[82] Interestingly, it was the Dutch medical community that first approached Unilever about the possibility of the development of a margarine with health attributes distinct from butter and other margarine brands then on the market. Anon, 'The evolution of margarine', Unilever Report and Accounts 1973 – Supplement: Edible Fats and Chilled Dairy Products, UNI/1974/1, Unilever Archives, Port Sunlight.

[83] Anon, 'The evolution of margarine', Unilever Report and Accounts 1973 – Supplement: Edible Fats and Chilled Dairy Products, UNI/1974/1, Unilever Archives, Port Sunlight.

fats and atherosclerosis as widely as possible'.[84] Their central principle was 'conscience as food manufacturers … to induce the public to buy what [they] genuinely believe to be best for them'.[85] By moving into the realm of health education in this way, Unilever, through the Flora brand, responded to the emergent scientific research that linked high fat diets (including those containing butter) with disease. From the outset, therefore, the development of Flora was not only as a value added butter substitute. Rather, Unilever marketed Flora as a health-inducing product with the aim of 'launch[ing] a high polyunsaturated fats margarine as a service to the public'. Within this context, Unilever was committed to an advertising remit based on factual information provision, thus constructing their advertisements as agents of communication for conveying information about diet and disease risk.

Flora was initially launched in Britain on a regional basis (Bolton and Brighton) to test market reaction to the product on a north/south divide. Its initial marketing campaign was tentative in advertising the product in terms of coronary heart disease or blood cholesterol lowering. Instead, these initial advertisements (placed in local newspapers in the two test towns) referenced general connotations of healthiness as a general goal of modern life (see Figure 4.2 and 4.3). In this early stage of its marketing strategy Unilever aimed to visualise the brand as both healthy and 'modern' to target young, married consumers who might already be conscious of, and sensitive to, the wider consumer interest in healthy eating, keeping fit and looking attractive. It was not until full nationwide distribution, secured in 1968 (and followed by a re-launch in 1969), that product advertising appropriated the marketing potential of the health claim with greater commitment and exactitude.[86] Yet, its initial advertising campaign aimed at the regional sites of Bolton and Brighton revealed

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[84] Anon, 'Fats, Heart Disease and Unilever', Unilever Archives, Port Sunlight, A4 5350.

[85] Anon, 'Fats, Heart Disease and Unilever', Unilever Archives, Port Sunlight, A4 5350.

[86] Anon, *Marketing Division Guardbook*, Unilever Archives, Port Sunlight, UNI/GF/MD/AL/1/176

important points of continuity with previous margarine campaigns introduced by Unilever (discussed in Chapter Two).[87] Their later innovative approach to advertising centred on visualising the male body to sell female-centric modes of shopping had not yet taken hold. But these test site advertisements provided another framework for analysing the relationship between Flora advertising, notions of modernity and the ways in which men and women were imagined to sell health.

For the lighter, healthier way you want to eat today it's Flora, the new margarine

MADE FROM LIGHT, GOLDEN VEGETABLE OILS

LIGHT IN TASTE, LIGHT TO SPREAD, LIGHT TO DIGEST

Modern needs, modern knowledge, make for a more intelligent approach to eating. The trend, now, is to lighter, healthier, better-balanced foods—and to new ideas like Flora, the new margarine, blended from light, golden vegetable oils.

You just couldn't rush around the way you do with the weight of an old-fashioned meal inside you. We know, now, that fitness comes not from stodge and starch but from a high protein diet with a balance of vitamins and minerals. Foods to favour are fish, cheese, poultry, lean meat, salads and fresh fruit.

Add to these the golden lightness of Flora, the new margarine. Blended from *light, golden vegetable oils*, it's light in taste, light to spread, and light to digest.

Get off to a lighter, brighter start

Fresh pear · Lean ham and poached egg · Toast and Flora margarine · Coffee.

A well-balanced breakfast, and Flora, with its golden vegetable oils, is a natural part of healthier eating. It's deliciously light and fresh in taste—with none of the heaviness of animal fats.

Don't let lunch weigh you down

Mushroom omelette · French beans · Roll with Flora margarine · Fresh fruit salad · Coffee.

This tasty lunch is full of the proteins and vitamins which are so good for you. With wise eating like this, you soon feel the benefit—a new sense of well-being, energy and good health.

Figure 4.2: 'For the Lighter, healthier way you want to eat today – it's Flora, the new margarine', advertisement (Unilever Archives, MD/AL 107/1 – B10309), September 1964. Reproduced with kind permission of Unilever [from an original in Unilever Archives]

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[87] See Chapter Two.

Building on the lifestyle-orientated marketing closely associated with Unilever's high-end margarine products, particularly Blue Band during the 1950s, Flora's initial regional advertising in newspapers and magazines followed a similar visual pattern. These advertisements were clearly divided into two or three main sections with at least one image dedicated to displaying a conventional family or couple (Figure 4.2 and Figure 4.3). The major visual departure from the aesthetic of the Blue Band advertisements of the 1950s was the repositioning of eating away from home and into the outside environment. Flora was constructed visually as the picnic margarine spread, the reliable alternative to butter for modern, middle-class pursuits – a day at a race track or a family sailing trip. As shown in Figure 4.2, the woman was the central element of the photographed scene. In the middle ground, her partner, also eating, was looking away from the viewer, his eyeline acting as a leading device to direct the viewer's eye to the background image of a racing car 'speeding' around a track. The man's stance, turned away from us, visually suggested that he is not 'engaged' with the message of the campaign – the healthy choice. Instead, the woman, staring directly into the camera, linked her consumption of Flora-spread sandwiches with the 'healthier way you want to eat today'. Therefore this visual arrangement suggested that the woman was still the visual and textual target (the 'you' of the copy line) for this advertisement. Her wedding ring is clearly visible as she raises the sandwich to her mouth – another cue that tied this advertisement to implicit understandings of women being responsible for food purchases and the health of the family. Pertinently, however, especially within the context of Unilever marketing output for other margarine brands, the textual elements of this advertisement omitted any reference to this positioning of women within society. Rather than emphasising the contemporary role of women as wives and mothers, the text used the rhetoric of modern lifestyles, the idea that ‘modern needs, modern knowledge, make for a more intelligent approach to eating’ in order to persuade viewers/readers to purchase Flora.

This textual prominence of the ‘modern’, in contrast to the ‘weight of an old-fashioned meal inside you’, reappeared within other newspaper advertisements produced by Unilever during this test phase. Figure 4.3 similarly aligned Flora with ‘lightness’, an attribute that was positively framed by linking it not only with metaphors associated with purity and naturalness, but also by framing it as opposite to ‘rich’, ‘old stodgy foods’ that this advertisement consigned to the past. Ultimately, the margarine product was visually associated with the modern, healthy family that ‘value today’s lighter, healthier eating’.

For families who value today’s lighter, healthier eating

New Flora Margarine gives you the lightness you want…because it’s made from light, golden vegetable oils

LIGHT IN TASTE! The first time you taste it, you’ll know Flora is today’s margarine. So deliciously light and fresh! So different from the old stodgy foods. New Flora Margarine is specially blended to give you the new lightness you want. That’s because it’s made from light, golden vegetable oils.

LIGHT TO SPREAD! See how your knife glides when you spread New Flora. So light and smooth in texture! Here again, New Flora brings you the new lightness you want – the lightness that goes with today’s healthier eating. That’s because it’s made from light, golden vegetable oils.

LIGHT TO DIGEST! You’d expect this margarine specially made for lighter, healthier eating to be easy to digest—and it is. So much less ‘rich’, less fatty-tasting! New Flora brings a new ‘light-eating’ quality to all your meals. That’s because it’s made from light, golden vegetable oils.

AVAILABLE IN BRIGHTON AND HOVE

Spread it from the ready-to-serve ½lb. tub. It’s in your shops now!

VFL 2/1-6490-65

Figure 3: ‘New Flora Margarine gives you the lightness you want’, advertisement (Unilever Archives, MD/AL 107/1 – B10309), September 1964.
Reproduced with kind permission of Unilever [from an original in Unilever Archives]

This advertisement again depicted the main visual scene in the open-air – this time showing a family spending time on a yacht. The close alignment of Flora with outdoor activities reinforced the idea of it as a healthy alternative to butter. The changing relationship between research and governmental policy had already facilitated the identification of both reduced-fat diets and regular outdoor exercise as important factors in maintaining heart health although it was not until the 1980s that diet and coronary heart disease would become a highly political issue.[88] Within this shifting policy and advice context, this advertisement displayed a second image of healthy food accompaniments including rye crackers, apples and grapes, which visually associated Flora with other foods already popularly understood as being healthy. By creating a visual focus on healthy eating and outdoor pursuits, Flora advertisements combined with other techniques of a health-centred visual culture (health posters, health education films, slimming literature, fitness culture) to emphasise the importance of outdoor physical activity to the production and management of a specifically 'modern' understanding of life.

Furthermore, this advertisement's (Figure 4.3) depiction of a family sailing trip constructed margarine consumption as synonymous with middle and upper class family outdoor pursuits and implicitly suggested that by eating the lighter Flora margarine, the central mother figure was ensuring the continued good health of her family. To this end a happy father and son relationship was depicted to the left of the foregrounded mother figure. Both were focused on each other and absent-mindedly

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[88] During the 1960s, epidemiological links between certain behaviours and disease outcomes were being negotiated between scientists, policy makers and the government. For the case of diet and heart disease, the establishment of the COMA panel (1970) and subsequent report (1974) marked the first dedicated attempt to form a coherent policy with regard the implications of diet on heart disease. See: Chapter Three; Mark W. Bufton, 'British Expert Advice on Diet and Heart Disease, c. 1945-2000', in *Making Health Policy: Networks in Research and Policy after 1945*, ed. by Virginia Berridge (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2005), pp. 125-148; Michael Mills, *The Politics of Dietary Change* (Aldershot: Dartmouth Publishing Company, 1992).

eating Flora-spread sandwiches. The mother figure looked contentedly beyond the frame, nonchalantly holding a triangle of sandwich, perhaps safe in the knowledge that Flora is taking care of her family's health. In this way both Figures 4.2 and 4.3 revealed that Flora advertisements, while adopting a different focus and message, were visually structured in a familiar composition centred on an identifiable female figure, the responsible agent for purchasing healthy food alternatives.

While Blue Band visually targeted the busy yet committed housewife as the main market for their spreadable, high-end butter alternative, Flora advertisements conveyed a more indistinct vision of gendered food relationships. As outlined above, both Figure 4.2 and Figure 4.3 removed the female figure from the domestic setting, yet their visual foregrounding suggested that these women were still the main purchasers of household food. Therefore, while the visual content of these advertisements complicated assured notions of gender specificity, they still conformed to well established conventions regarding the social positioning of women and their domestic responsibilities. However, between 1951 and 1971, the number of women working on a part-time basis more than tripled to thirty-eight per cent.[89] Suzanne Franks has linked the rise in the female working population to the affluence of the postwar period, which provided women with time-saving household technologies, thereby freeing them of certain laborious tasks.[90] Yet, as Ruth Schwartz-Cowan argued, the spread of affluence and the expansion in household technologies was not accompanied by an increase in leisure for housewives, but instead increased the amount of work for some and the level of productivity

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[89] Dolly Smith Wilson, 'Gender: Change and Continuity', in *A Companion to Contemporary Britain 1939-2000*, ed.by Paul Addison and Harriet Jones (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2007), p. 251.
Suzanne Franks, *Having None of It: Women, Men and the Future of* Work (London: Granta, 1999), as cited in Wilson Smith, 'Gender, Change and Continuity', p. 250.

[90] Franks, *Having None of It*, as cited in Wilson Smith, 'Gender, Change and Continuity', p. 250.

expected.[91] Dolly Smith Wilson, however, has surmised that women entered the workforce in large numbers prior to widespread affluence. A variety of oral history studies revealed that women themselves repeatedly identified the acquisition of new consumer goods for their families as key motivational factors for obtaining work outside the home.[92] This reflected not just a desire for new material goods but also for a different family lifestyle. By removing the women from the domestic environment in both of these advertisements, Unilever was simultaneously attempting to secure a new consumer base for Flora and if it was to conceive itself as 'modern' and new, the visual elements of the brand would likewise have to be constructed as 'progressive' and contemporary.

Certainly, the copy-line of both of these newspaper advertisements (Figure 4.2 and Figure 4.3) revealed the centrality of nutrition and dietary advice in targeting prospective purchasers of Flora. As a 'healthier, better-balanced food' with 'the lightness you want', Flora was visually and textually constructed as 'modern' and healthy. The visual accompaniments for the spread included low-fat crisp-breads and fruit. Not only did this epitomise the trend for 'light' foods during the 1960s and 1970s, of which margarine played a large part, but it also effectively disrupted the commonly held belief that butter had important protective properties.[93] Whether this development of a healthy margarine was more about marketing than health is largely unimportant because it created the notion of healthier foods that depended on single identifiable ingredients. In this case, polyunsaturated fats were isolated as *the* new and modern component of Flora margarine with Unilever committed to a 'high poly-

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[91] Ruth Schwartz Cowan, *More Work for Mother: The Ironies of Household Technology from the Open Hearth to the Microwave* (New York: Basic Books, 1983), pp. 195-216.

[92] Smith Wilson, 'Gender: Change and Continuity', p. 250. See also: Roberts, *Women and Families*; Jane Lewis, *Women in Britain since 1945: Women, Family, Work and the State in the Post-War Years* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992); Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska, *Women in Twentieth Century Britain* (Harlow: Pearson Education, 2001).

[93] Levenstein, *Paradox of Plenty*, pp. 195-212.

unsaturated fats margarine as a service to the public … to create the image of Unilever as a progressive, forward-looking authority on questions of fat and diet'.[94] While such products have often been criticised for appropriating a reductionist approach to disease prevention through diet in conjunction with issues of taste, cost and the selling of particular lifestyles, Unilever's Flora was exceptional as a butter substitute in adopting a health education function on a national level from the outset.[95]

In doing so, Unilever contributed to the creation of the healthy body as a commercial icon and as a product of newly emerging cultural values that elevated the social worth attached to health and the healthy body.[96] By commercialising the techniques for disciplining the body through food (conforming to epidemiologically determined health behaviours), Unilever utilised the same rhetoric of individual responsibility for health and disease prevention that the government promoted. Thus, they emphasised the personal strategic dimension of health claims in selling food in the postwar period.[97] By adopting the tenets of epidemiological public health, marketers explained disease in terms of risk factors (and how certain foods combatted this), and Flora contributed to the widespread dissemination of individualised tools for prevention. Roberta Sassatelli has traced a similar development with postwar fitness culture, emphasising the complexity of the gym as not just a site for achieving the perfect body, but also as a locale where a vast array of meanings and identities are

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[94] Fats, Heart Disease and Unilever, 'Putting the Policy into Practice', 1964, Unilever Archives, Port Sunlight.

[95] See: Fitzsimmons, 'Oh What Those Oats Can Do.', p. 56; Heasman and Mellentin, *The Functional Foods Revolution*, pp. 3-33; Gyorgy Scrinis, 'Nutritionism and Functional Foods', pp. 269-291.

[96] Susan Bordo, *Unbearable Weight: Feminism, Western Culture and the Body* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993); Mike Featherstone, 'The Body in Consumer Culture', *Theory, Culture and Society* 1:2 (1982), pp. 18-33; Arthur Frank, 'For a Sociology of the Body', in *The Body: Social Processes and Cultural Theory*, ed. by Mike Featherstone, Mike Hepworth and Bryan S Turner (London: Sage, 1991).

[97] For the depoliticisation of postwar fitness culture, also closely tied to consumption, health and the body see: Roberta Sassatelli, 'The Commercialization of Discipline: Keep Fit Culture and its Values', *Journal of Modern Italian Studies* 5:3 (2000), pp. 396-411 and Roberta Sassatelli, 'Interaction Order and Beyond: A Field Analysis of Body Culture within Fitness Gyms', *Body & Society* 5:2-3 (1999), pp. 227-248.

negotiated and re-negotiated.[98] She suggested that the local environment is of particular importance in shaping wider cultural values and the ideals of the fit, slim body, coded as a symbol of individual choice and social worth. Certainly, Flora was launched as a particularly British incarnation of the health margarine. In similar ways to Sassatelli's examination of the gym, the health product was loaded with multiple, region-specific meanings.[99] Margarine consumption in Britain was greatly affected by the impact of butter rationing during the Second World War. Associated with austerity, margarine faced an uphill struggle in attempting to regain market share against butter during the period of decontrol. Thus, margarine manufacturers and advertisers needed to re-imagine their product not in terms of scarcity but as a symbol of a new, postwar, healthy society. As a result, Flora quickly became bound up with normative injunctions, inviting 'modern' health-conscious individuals to take responsibility for their bodies – to feed them foods beneficial to health and thereby enable them to invest in body presentation for their self-constitution.[100]

As a result of this changing social and consumer base, the visual depiction of women was re-negotiated as part of Flora's advertising campaigns. In these initial Flora advertisements (Figures 4.2 and 4.3), women were still identified as the central agents for encouraging behavioural change within the realm of health and nutrition. Their visual foregrounding in conjunction with their positioning within the frame – looking either at the viewer or beyond the limits of the frame – suggested an engagement with the message of the advertisement, a willingness to adopt 'modern', healthy, active lifestyles in order to uphold conventional father-son relationships or male-orientated outdoor pursuits. But this straightforward interpretation of women's

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[98] Sassatelli, 'Interaction Order and Beyond', pp. 227-228.

[99] By 'region-specific' I am referring to individual countries within a multinational corporate system. See: Jones, *Renewing Unilever*, pp. 17-53.

[100] Anthony Synnott*, The Body Social: Symbolism, Self and Society* (London: Routledge, 1993); John O'Neill, *Five Bodies: The Human Shape of Modern Society* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985).

role in relation to food consumption in the home was complicated by the high rates of male mortality from heart disease and other chronic conditions. Men were suffering from higher rates of ‘diseases of affluence’ and consequently Flora’s visual tools of selling had to adapt to a changed reality. Moving from their more traditional tried and tested visual composition of family units and female figures as the main targets of advertising, Unilever altered their advertising for Flora following its nationwide expansion in 1968. The principal change was that it now began to explicitly emphasise the health benefits of the product for heart health rather than references to general healthiness or ‘lightness’ (Figure 4.4).

YOUR HEALTH AND THE FOOD YOU EAT

The importance of polyunsaturated fats in your diet

Many factors are associated with the development of heart disease, e.g. lack of exercise, stress, excessive cigarette smoking and obesity, but one of the factors strongly implicated is the kind of fat eaten in the diet.

In this context there are two important types of dietary fats, saturated and polyunsaturated. There is strong evidence that a diet which is high in polyunsaturated and low in saturated fats may reduce the plasma cholesterol concentration. There is evidence that by lowering the plasma cholesterol level it may be possible to reduce the chances of an eventual heart attack. It seems best, therefore, to start eating polyunsaturates early in life and to make them a part of our regular diet.

In general, saturated fats predominate in foods of animal origin, whereas polyunsaturated fats are more abundant in many vegetable oils such as sunflower, soya bean, etc. Our modern western diet tends to be high in animal fats and rather low in vegetable oils. Since nearly half the fat we eat is part of other foods such as meat, eggs, cheese, etc., there is little we can do about this part of our fat consumption short of making radical changes in the types of food we eat. However, the other half of our fats intake is in foods like butter, ordinary margarines and cooking fats and here it is a relatively simple matter to make a significant improvement by replacing animal fat by fat products which are high in polyunsaturates.

While the evidence is not yet conclusive, and the basic causes of heart disease are not completely understood, some doctors believe it prudent to advise people to eat *polyunsaturated* fats rather than saturated.

LINTAS VFL 15-8816-65

NEW **Flora**
TABLE MARGARINE
high in
polyunsaturated
fats

Flora is a margarine high in polyunsaturates.

It doesn’t only *do* you good, it tastes good too. Very good.

That’s because Flora is made only from pure golden vegetable oils.

Makes it light and deliciously natural tasting.

Use Flora wherever you would use butter or ordinary margarines—spreading, cooking, in sauces or on vegetables and enjoy the difference it makes.

eatwell-eatwisely
with **Flora**

Figure 4.4: ‘Your Health and the Food You Eat’, advertisement (Unilever Archives MD/AL 107/1 B10309), 1968.
Reproduced with kind permission of Unilever [from an original in Unilever Archives]

To do so, they briefly removed human figures from their visual promotional material altogether. Instead, they focussed on the margarine itself, with close-up images of the Flora tub and accompaniments such as bread. The brand now appropriated a health education style of address with a large section of the advertisement dedicated to textually outlining the links between diets high in saturated fats and the risk of heart disease. Figure 4.4 corresponded to governmental health education material – particularly leaflet material – that similarly relied on detailed textual support to convey in-depth health advice.[101] Therefore, this advertisement, while visually conventional (and conforming to contemporary publications that conveyed health risk in terms of behaviour), was original and inventive because it functioned primarily as an advertisement – to encourage viewers to buy a product – and not purely as a tool of health education – to persuade viewers to alter their personal behaviours. By bridging a gap between advertising as a social ill and health education as a positive tool for the public good, Flora was assuming a voice of authority with regard to heart disease risk.[102] Pertinently, the visibility of Flora as a brand within the visual and textual components of this advertisement was inferior in emphasis to the detailed text about 'Your Health and the Food You Eat'. It was only on the right-hand side of the advertisement that Flora was advertised in terms closely associated with marketing. Therefore, the visual component of the advertisement was largely supportive – clearly showing one possible inclusion of Flora margarine in the daily diet. The inclusion of

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[101] For example: Health Education Council, *Look After Yourself!: A simple guide to exercise & diet* (undated) and Health Education Council, *Looing After Yourself* (London: Health Education Council, 1979).

[102] For more on this debate about advertising as a social ill see: Schwarzkopf, 'They do it with Mirrors', pp. 135-136. For more on health education as beneficial see: Ornella Moscucci, 'The British Fight against Cancer: Publicity and Education, 1900-1948, *Social History of Medicine* 23:2 (2007), pp. 356-373; Ian Levitt, 'TB, Glasgow and the Mass Radiography Campaign in the Nineteen Fifties: A Democratic Health Service in Action' (unpublished conference paper, Univeristy of Glasgow, 2003); Elizabeth Toon, 'Cancer as the General Population Knows It: Knowledge, Fear and Lay Education in 1950s Britain', *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 87:1 (2007), pp. 116-138.

fibre-rich brown bread, as opposed to the ever-popular mass produced white bread, aligned Flora with a shift in food consumption towards healthier options. Indeed, the inclusion of the new tag line 'Eat well-eat wisely with Flora' reinforced this notion that Flora was at the forefront of a new healthy-eating trend in postwar Britain.

The advertisement assumed the look and scientific journalism style of a broadsheet newspaper. Its use of headlines, sub-headings and blocked text divided by one central linked image was already customary within the world of print journalism and considering the highly-medicalised information the advertisement was trying to convey, Unilever opted for a notable departure from Flora's household-structured advertising forerunners. Science communication within broadsheet newspapers underwent rapid growth in postwar Britain. One distinct shift was in the 'medicalisation' of science news'.[103] While Martin Bauer argued that this represented a shift from reporting state and public technologies, such as nuclear power, to the reporting of commercial and private technologies, such as biotechnology, this move reflected the contemporaneous rise in medical science journalism itself.[104] Thus, as this Flora advertisement was placed in newspapers during early 1968, it integrated into the wider, informative broadcast context of the daily newspaper. The advertisement aimed to explain the effects of large quantities of animal fat in the body in relation to heart disease specifically. It used particular, detailed scientific

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[103] Martin W. Bauer and Jane Gregory, 'From journalism to corporate communication in post-war Britain', in *Journalism, Science and Society: Science Communication Between News and Public Relations*, ed. by Martin W. Bauer and Massimiano Bucchi (Oxford and New York: Routledge, 2007), p. 35.

[104] Martin Bauer, 'The medicalisation of science news – from the "rocket scalpel" to the "gene-meteorite" complex', *Social Science Information* 37:4 (1998), pp. 531-751; Kelly Loughlin, 'Spectacle and Secrecy: Press coverage of conjoined twins in 1950s Britain', *Medical History* 49:2 (2005), pp. 197-212; Lesley Diack and David F. Smith, 'The media and the management of a food crisis: Aberdeen's typhoid outbreak in 1964', in *Medicine, the market and the mass media: Producing Health in the Twentieth Century*, ed. by Virginia Berridge and Kelly Loughlin (London: Routledge, 2005), pp. 79-94; Kelly Loughlin, 'Networks of Mass Communication: Reporting Science, Health and Medicine in the 1950s and the '60s', in *Making Health Policy: Networks in Research and Policy after 1945*, ed. by Virginia Berridge (Amsterdam Rodopi, 2005), pp. 295-322; Anne Karpf, *Doctoring the Media: The Reporting of Health and Medicine* (London: Routledge, 1988), pp. 33-56.

vernacular such as ‘plasma cholesterol concentration’, while embedding this specificity within general health advice regarding fat intake and the potential health benefits of polyunsaturates. Notably, the textual portion of the advertisement closed with ‘while the evidence is not yet conclusive, and the basic causes of heart disease are not completely understood, some doctors believe it prudent to advise people to eat *polyunsaturated* fats rather than saturated’. By admitting that the scientific evidence remained tentative during the 1960s, Flora adopted a ‘truth-telling’ stance and thus established itself as a brand that kept its purchasers informed of current scientific thinking regarding edible fats and heart disease without exaggerating the measurable health benefits of eating Flora. Instead, it strongly suggested that by increasing the amount of polyunsaturated fat in individual diets it might be possible to avoid heart health issues in the future, ‘It seems best ... to start eating polyunsaturates early in life and make them part of our regular diet’. I therefore suggest that from the launch of Flora nationwide in 1968, Unilever committed itself to the dissemination of health information pertaining to diet and health to the population to sell their product.

In establishing Flora as a health brand from its inception Unilever was carefully re-negotiating the institutional and cultural formation of food risk and responsibility. Adopting a language of self-care, it constructed this polyunsaturated margarine as one source of health authority within postwar British public health consumerism. While Unilever’s central aim was to sell the Flora product, their employment of the rhetoric of health education to do so widens the historical understanding of health education in the postwar Britain. While selling a ‘healthy’ product has a different overall aim than governmental attempts at selling ‘healthy behaviours’, the inclusion of conceptions of risk, personal responsibility and choice demonstrates how regardless of objective Unilever was functioning, at least in terms of language, to sell a product within the model of contemporary health education. In this way Flora contributed to the movement of the language of nutrition and health science from the laboratory and into the household. The work of Nancy Tomes suggested that the popularisation of health knowledge occurred on many different social, cultural and political levels and to ignore the social and communal aspects is to overlook elements of the historical processes informing behavioural change.[105] Flora's health claim became increasingly important to its distinctiveness as a margarine product, while its advertising campaigns became an educational force in their own right. In ways not dissimilar to what Tomes has exposed in relation to germ theory in late nineteenth and twentieth century United States, 'the lessons of the laboratory ... became part of the fabric of everyday life'.[106]

Therefore the historical process by which popular understandings of disease prevention was publicised can be explored in relation to the health marketing of food products during the late twentieth century. Not only were notions of 'selling' health central to programmes of popular education at the behest of government but they also formed important components of marketing agendas by the food industry.[107] In doing so, Unilever and their Flora brand helped to link the production of scientific knowledge about nutrition and their social facets with the promotion and individualised application of such knowledge within the environment of the home. At the same time as public health adopted marketing, using the mass media to inculcate risk-avoiding behaviours in the population, Unilever, in particular, utilised the language of public health as a marketing tool in and of itself. It was because Unilever

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[105] Nancy Tomes Nancy Tomes, *The Gospel of Germs: Men, Women and the Microbe in American Life* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998), pp. 13-20.

[106] Tomes, *The Gospel of Germs,* p. 13.

[107] Of course, Unilever was not alone in creating, manufacturing and marketing foods with particular health benefits. Yakult was the first health food launched in Britain that claimed a value-added health benefit. Similarly, foods like porridge oats, oily fish and eggs (while 'natural' products) were all marketed for their health benefits within a balanced diet by manufacturers and agriculturalists alike.

created a special place for Flora within the relationship between emergent governmentally instituted modes of health (and eating) behaviours, and the construction of consumer-focused health foods that it occupied an important position in the development of health food marketing as a 'responsible action' in postwar Britain.[108] This exploitation of the emerging diet-disease link by manufacturers and corporations in order to sell a variety of goods and services to health-conscious consumers fostered secondary sites of health promotion and information provision. No longer was the process of health education pertaining to food one-way and government-led through public health campaigning, whether at local or national level. As David F. Smith and Jim Philips suggested, the making of food policy, food regulation and the popularisation of scientific food 'facts' were complex, diverse and involved many varying expert and non-expert actors.[109] It was dynamic and fluid, with information, ideas and images traded among different audiences including, but not limited to, scientists, practicing physicians, the food industry, the science press, government institutions whilst accommodating competing and disparate views, becoming as it did part of the working hypothesis of everyday life.[110]

The 'Stop: Ought He To Be Eating Flora?' Campaign and the Flora Information Service: Visually Constructing Healthy Individuals

During the 1960s, food choice was tentatively (and later assertively) identified as one such behaviour that might be significant in understanding chronic disease risk

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[108] Anon, Flora UK Product History, Unpublished, Unilever Archives, Port Sunlight.

[109] David F. Smith and Jim Philips, 'Food policy and regulation: a multiplicity of actors and experts', in David F. Smith and Jim Philips (eds.), *Food, Science, Policy and Regulation in the Twentieth Century: International and comparative perspectives,* pp. 1-16.

[110] This approach is greatly indebted to the work of Nancy Tomes in *The Gospel of Germs*.

amongst the population.[111] With risk factor epidemiology gaining prominence within public health, it was not surprising that the individual would come to play a decisive role as an agent of change in preventing chronic disease. This shift heralded the rise of a new health ideology centred on individual responsibility for good health, lifestyle and behaviour.[112] Spreading beyond the boundaries of public health, this ideology was co-opted by contemporary consumer culture as a new way of marketing and selling goods to those same individuals constructed as at-risk.[113] Throughout the postwar period marketing specialists identified new consumer markets according to social class and later lifestyle.[114] Unilever adopted similar research and development strategies and was a major influence in segmenting markets by demographics and lifestyles.[115] To this end, the company promoted a variety of personal care brands that emphasised individualised conceptions of image and aspiration over functionality in its advertising. Geoffrey Jones has argued that it was in the production of margarine, and in particular margarine closely linked to heart health, that Unilever established the nearest equivalent to the 'Pepsi generation'.[116]

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[111] During the 1970s, the McGovern Report (1977) and *Healthy People: The Surgeon General's Report on Health Promotion and Disease Prevention* (1979), both from the US and *Prevention and Health: Everybody's Business* (1976) and *Prevention and Health: Eating for Health* (1978) in Britain firmly allied particular diets with disease risk. Mark Bufton and Virginia Berridge, 'Post-war nutrition science and policy making in Britain c. 1945-1994: the case of diet and heart disease', in *Food, Science, Policy and Regulation in the Twentieth Century: International and Comparative Perspectives*, ed. by David F. Smith and Jim Philips (London: Routledge, 2000), pp. 207-222

[112] Berridge argues that the mass media played an increasingly important role in the extension and maintenance of this ideology helping to reconfigure what health and citizenship now entailed. Berridge, 'Medicine, public health and the media', p. 361.

[113] Flora was launched as a dietary spreadable fat, vitaminised with vitamin A and D and containing 50-55 per cent polyunsaturated fats that were claimed to benefit those at risk from coronary heart disease and distributed to pharmacies on prescription. It established its identity as a quasi-medical product and was repositioned in 1963 as a diet margarine with distribution widened to the grocery sector. It was later remarketed as Flora in Britain, again aimed at lifestyle approaches to market segmentation. See: Jones, *Renewing Unilever*, p. 122-123.

[114] Jones, *Renewing Unilever*, p. 122-123.

[115] Jones, *Renewing Unilever*, p. 122-123.

[116] Jones, *Renewing Unilever*, p. 122-123. The 'Pepsi generation' was the theme of very successful advertising campaigns by Pepsi-Cola that launched in 1963 that linked Pepsi drinking with youth and the generation gap between young 'modern' consumers and their parents.

As outlined in Chapters Two and Three, the associated rise of the individual has been a central development in public health during the postwar period. Virginia Berridge, in particular, has examined the role the individual at risk played in mixing moral and medical concerns within chronic disease education programmes.[117] While her work in the main focused on governmental habit-changing health campaigns on smoking and health, similar parallels can be drawn to non-governmental education initiatives during this period. It was within this emerging (and purposefully linked) public health and consumerist context that Unilever identified the informed, health-conscious consumer as their prime target for advertising Flora, a product with obvious and timely health associations.

Following their first nationwide advertising campaign for Flora during 1968 and 1969, Unilever continued to place emphasis on the link between saturated fats and heart disease. The 'Stop: Ought He To Be Eating Flora?' campaign included the first Flora advertisements that visually focussed solely on the male margarine consumer, while nevertheless speaking to the conventional female purchaser. Unilever's aim in doing so was to ensure that 'the emotional aspect of the brand was amplified by advertising which featured those perceived as being classically at risk from heart disease – men'.[118] Advertising had hitherto been relatively successful in inculcating norms of behaviour regarding health. In particular, cigarette smoking had already been identified as malleable to advertising, establishing the idea that demand itself could be shaped and reshaped by public relations and advertising.[119] Cigarette advertisers had emphasised specific 'functions' of particular cigarette brands –

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[117] Virginia Berridge, 'Medicine, public health and the media in Britain from the nineteen fifties to the nineteen seventies', *Historical Research* 82:216 (2009), pp. 360-373.

[118] Anon, Flora UK Product History, Unpublished, Unilever Archives, Port Sunlight.

[119] Allan Brandt, 'Engineering Consumer Confidence in the Twentieth Century', in *Smoke: A Global History of Smoking*, ed. by Sander L. Gilman and Zhou Xun (London: Reaktion Books, 2004), pp. 333-334.

‘natural’, ‘soothing’, ‘toasted’, ‘filtered’ amongst others – to increase sales and this technique was similarly utilised by the anti-smoking lobby during the 1960s and 1970s. The smoking and lung cancer connection certainly contributed to the development of an advertising aesthetic declaring the health benefits of specific behaviours.[120]

The very individual process of food choice, and the resultant individualised progression of risk, prompted Unilever to engage its own research and development division in learning more about the possible links between fat consumption and heart disease. In formulating a policy on dietary fats and heart disease, Unilever were quick to identify the benefits that publicising these possible links could afford them in terms of market share. Given the tentative nature of scientific consensus on the subject, Unilever sought to market Flora as comprising ‘an aura of good health’, an important component of everyday healthy eating and an essential part of the ‘modern’ diet.[121] As a component of this policy, Unilever aimed to launch ‘a high poly-unsaturated fats margarine as a service to the public’.

This emphasis on the provision of a service would continue to impact the development of Flora during the 1970s. The launch of the Flora Information Service (later the Flora Heart Project) in 1971 formalised the company’s commitment to supplying a public service through the supply of health education materials. With scientific research into the specific link between fat consumption and coronary heart disease still emerging, Unilever established the Flora Information Service as a way to both communicate the role of polyunsaturated fats in the prevention of coronary heart

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[120] Allan Brandt, *The Cigarette Century: The Rise, Fall and Deadly Persistence of the Product that Defined America* (New York: Basic Books, 2007), pp. 106.

[121] Policy Memorandum No. 1: Fats, Heart Disease and Unilever, Unilever Archives, Port Sunlight.

disease and to educate potential purchasers of the benefits of Flora to their health.[122] The Service initially focused on researching, writing and circulating literature that was mainly distributed to health professionals and educators. Early literature published by the Service and made available to the public included the *Eating for a Healthy Heart* booklet, a cholesterol and saturated fats counter and other booklets on protecting the whole family from coronary heart disease.[123] While, as a rule, the materials produced by the Service omitted supporting visuals they still performed an important function (rather similar to the Stork Cookery Service during food rationing) in establishing a public visibility for the brand, aligning it with clear, honest and user-friendly forms of health education. The government, through the auspices of the Health Education Council, was simultaneously distributing analogous forms of health education but remained more tentative about links between particular diets and the incidence of heart disease. This was in part because the first COMA report presented a general lack of scientific consensus on the subject and also because the HEC were committed to campaigning on a better health agenda, which – while it included references to heart disease – was not yet the sole focus.[124] Therefore, I would suggest that the Flora Information Service did much to facilitate the inclusion of short health education pieces centred on diet and heart disease as marketing tools, ensuring that scientific knowledge – whether undeniable or not – was disseminated to the public in new ways, distinct from governmental efforts. Furthermore, this approach proved

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[122] Anon, 'The Story of the Flora Project for Heart Disease Prevention', *Nutrition and Food Science* 2 (1992), pp. 24-25. See also: *Eating for a Healthy Heart booklet* (Unilever: Flora Information Service c. 1973).

[123] Anon, 'The Story of the Flora Project for Heart Disease Prevention', p. 24. This focus on prevention and the family would later become visually important within the Flora Man campaign of the late 1970s and 1980s.

[124] See Chapter Three for more detail on the development of government campaigns and the work of the HEC.

durable, with Unilever continually reinforcing their health education role in many of Flora's subsequent advertisements during the 1970s and 1980s.

With the dual decision to launch a new advertising campaign for Flora centred on the at-risk male figure, coupled with the decision to launch a Flora Information Service during 1970 and 1971, Unilever renegotiated accepted modes of gendered advertising and the social role food brands could play beyond the confines of commercial life. In the first campaign to do so, the poster advertisement for 'Stop: Ought he to be eating Flora' (Figure 4.5) combined these selling and educative functions.

Stop:

Ought he to be eating Flora?

Flora vegetable oil margarine contains no animal fats. It is higher in polyunsaturates than any other spread (ratio of polyunsaturates to saturates 2:1) and contains far more of some essential nutrients. Oughtn't he to be eating Flora . . . especially when it tastes so good?

Flora
polyunsaturate margarine

Figure 4.5: 'Stop: Ought he to be eating Flora?', advertisement (Unilever Archives, Flora/Go Organic Box), June 1971 – version that appeared in Readers Digest.
Reproduced with kind permission of Unilever [from an original in Unilever Archives]

The visual component of the poster displayed a foregrounded middle-aged man about to eat a piece of bread. His torso was turned away from the viewer but his face was twisted back towards us, as if suddenly caught in an act that is, if not unacceptable, then at least discouraged. By portraying the male figure turning his face towards the viewer, a level of hesitation was established. The word ‘Stop’, which covered the top of the man’s face, was emblazoned in large white font, prompting a reconsideration on his part. A man in motion, in the process of lifting a morsel of bread to his mouth was frozen in mid-movement. He was represented considering or being reminded of the benefits of healthy eating by adding Flora to his daily diet. The bright red background emphasised the male figure, rendering his locational setting unimportant to the tenets of healthy eating. The photographic style in which the man was presented recalled the everyman, the realistic and relatable potential sufferer of chronic disease. The advertisement was produced in colour, rather than black and white, reflecting both its reproduction within a magazine (as opposed to a newspaper), which had already embraced colour images within its advertising pages, and the wider shift on the part of large corporations to advertise in colour in order to ‘draw on different type[s] of ‘psychological theme’[s]’ [125] As Stefan Schwarzkopf argued, colour advertisements, particularly in consumer magazines, ‘worked on the incitement of fears, jealousies or largely hidden sexual desires’.[126] Therefore, by displaying a generic, middle-aged man – at the highest risk from coronary heart disease in 1970s Britain – this advertisement aimed to incite fears, or at least caution, to change a very particular eating habit. Not only was it implicitly suggested that margarine was healthier than butter – ‘Flora vegetable oil margarine contains no animal fats. It was higher in polyunsaturated fats than any other spread’ –, it was proposed that Flora was

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[125] Schwarzkopf, ‘They do it with Mirrors’, p. 139.
[126] Schwarzkopf, ‘They do it with Mirrors’, p. 139.

healthier than other standard margarine brands because of its high content of health-inducing polyunsaturated fats. Similarly, an apparent division was outlined between animal and vegetable fats (Figure 4.6), with the health benefits of the latter central to the marketing strategy of Flora.

Stop:

Ought he to be eating Flora?

Flora vegetable oil margarine contains no animal fats. It is higher in polyunsaturates than any other spread (ratio of polyunsaturates to saturates 2:1) and contains far more of some essential nutrients.

Oughtn't he to be eating Flora . . . especially when it tastes so good?

Flora
polyunsaturate margarine

Figure 4.6: 'Stop: Ought he to be eating Flora?' Flora Advertisement (The Advertising Archives, 30544851), 1971.

He's one of the busiest men in town. While his door may say *Office Hours 2 to 4*, he's actually on call 24 hours a day.

The doctor is a scientist, a diplomat, and a friendly sympathetic human being all in one, no matter how long and hard his schedule.

According to a recent Nationwide survey:

MORE DOCTORS SMOKE CAMELS
THAN ANY OTHER CIGARETTE

DOCTORS in every branch of medicine—113,597 in all—were queried in this nationwide study of cigarette preference. Three leading research organizations made the survey. The gist of the query was—What cigarette do you smoke, Doctor?

The brand named most was Camel!

The rich, full flavor and cool mildness of Camel's superb blend of costlier tobaccos seem to have the same appeal to the smoking tastes of doctors as to millions of other smokers. If you are a Camel smoker, this preference among doctors will hardly surprise you. If you're not—well, try Camels now.

Your "T-Zone" Will Tell You...
T for Taste . . .
T for Throat . . .
that's your proving ground for any cigarette. See if Camels don't suit your "T-Zone" to a "T."

CAMELS *Costlier Tobaccos*

Figure 4.7: 'More Doctors smoke Camels than any other cigarette' (Stanford University), 1946-1958.

Showing the same middle-aged man as above, this advertisement recalled the extremely successful 'More Doctors Smoke Camels' campaign of the 1940s and 1950s in the United States. Not only did it similarly covey the white, middle-class, male consumer but it also visibly conveyed consumption – the cigarette of the older advert replaced by the chunk of bread presumably spread with questionable butter. However in this case, rather than utilising the figure of authority to reinforce the brand message – the doctor-figure of the Camels advertisement – the Flora poster utilised the brand itself as the central expert and imparter of health information. Thus, the food manufacturer was seen to speak for itself, based on the research of food technology and food science experts and not through the medium of a general health professional. Indeed, while the doctor was quoted for Camel, the male figure in the Flora advertisement was voiceless. He was shown as a motionless, opinion-less object of the 'modern' health project, compliant with its health mission– the individual involved (or soon to be involved) in healthy personal behaviours. The real health expert that this advertisement sought to establish was Flora, the brand that is 'Everything you need to make Flora the kind of advice that people are likely to take'.[127]

By suggesting 'Ought he to be eating Flora?', the textual support, typed over and onto the main image (both 4.5 and 4.6) created a dialogue between Flora as a health educator, and the male figure as the important agent of change. Notably, this visual straightforwardness was complicated by the use of the third person in the textual element of this advertisement. This was an unusual grammatical choice considering that it was aiming to change both the shopping and eating habits of 'you' the viewer. The use of 'he' in this case automatically gendered Flora as a margarine for men specifically and yet insinuated that the 'you', the viewer of this advertisement might not have been male but female – the wife who wishes that 'he', her husband would consume more beneficial dietary fats. While the visual figure of the man already insinuated this, the textual support confirmed it. This was a decisive move by Unilever. The advertising campaign altered the visual tradition of women as central figures in margarine and butter advertising and instead only obliquely referenced their widespread societal role as homemakers responsible for food choice. In their place,

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[127] Heart-Risk: People and Polyunsaturates, poster advertisement, 1970, Unilever Archives, Port Sunlight.

this Flora campaign made men not just the central visual component, but the only visual component – the lone man as the representative man at risk from developing coronary heart disease. This recalled the lone 'victim' rhetoric used in early government education campaigns, which visually depicted children on their own, separated from both parents and health professionals, to evoke wider societal fears and indeed sympathies about children, their health and their welfare.[128]

By coding the individual at-risk from coronary heart disease as personally and totally responsible (even if the obligation for purchasing still lay with women) for their own health outcomes, Unilever's Flora advertisements were visually constructing bodies in ways not dissimilar to government-sponsored health education initiatives during the same period. Building upon an established visual language and vernacular of discussing health, risk and the centrality of individual responsibility in health outcomes, Flora marketed itself as *the* brand through which these principles of a modern public health system could be achieved. Unilever's chief objective in launching Flora as an unconventional 'expert' within a wide range of health actors that were commenting on health, diet and disease during this time was to attach the brand closely to the gradual scientific realisation of the connection between polyunsaturated fats and heart disease and in doing so make it logical for Flora marketing to strengthen the polyunsaturated fats element in line with this shift.[129] During the 'Stop' campaign, the polyunsaturated claim remained moderate, 'confined to the statement that margarine contains poly-unsaturated fats and, in very general terms are believed to have beneficial effects on one's health' and combined with other

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[128] This is particularly noticeable regarding childhood cancer education material where children were depicted alone, unintentional 'victims' of a cruel disease. For example see: Anne Higonnet, *Pictures of Innocence: The History and Crisis of Ideal Childhood* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1998) and Gretchen Marie Krueger, ' 'For Jimmy and the Boys and Girls of America': Publicizing Childhood Cancers in Twentieth-Century America', *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 81:1 (2007), pp. 73-90.

[129] Fats, Heart Disease and Unilever, 'Conclusion', 1964, Unilever Archives, Port Sunlight.

authenticated health claims and advertisable qualities such as flavour or texture.[130] As a later 'Stop' advertisement made clear: 'Some people may buy Flora for its flavour, the easy spreading or simply because its fashionable. It doesn't matter, just so long as they stay with it. Because Flora is made to do you good'.[131] It was this use of the word 'good' to imply healthiness that allowed Unilever to market Flora under a health remit, but stay true to their commitment to informing consumers about current scientific findings while not exaggerating the quantifiable health benefits of Flora.

As historian Harvey Levenstein has declared, 'to be accepted, new ideas about food must also fit in with people's social and economic aspirations'.[132] In the postwar period, in the United States and Europe particularly, societies increasingly valued the role of scientific nutrition advice over older forms of knowledge. The broader societal value placed on affluence, self-sufficiency and personal choice during this period, further directed consumers to adopt a prophylactic approach to their health through diet and fitness.[133] The combination of government campaigns and food industry marketing initiatives that emphasised the role of preventive health, individual responsibility, lifestyle choice and behavioural change within the context of food, diet and fitness constructed a wide-ranging understanding of health in relation to individualised and personal body management practices.[134] In this context, the ability to 'add value' to products was paramount for food manufacturers. As Flora so aptly demonstrated, by creating a health-consciousness around the brand, Unilever was able

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[130] Fats, Heart Disease and Unilever, 'Putting the Policy into Practice', 1964, Unilever Archives, Port Sunlight.

[131] 'Stop. Ought you to be eating Flora?' advertisement, c.1970, Unilever Archives, Port Sunlight.

[132] Harvey Levenstein, *Revolution at the Table: The Transformation of the American Diet* (Berkeley: University of California, 2003), p. 211.

[133] After all, the so-called 'diseases of affluence' by their very moniker suggest the fluidity with which disease, affluence and lifestyle were constructed as interlinked.

[134] For the early development of this see: Zweiniger-Bargielowska, *Managing the Body*. She outlined the rise of health food shops within the context of emergent techniques of body management, including vegetarianism: pp. 176-177 and for a brief discussion of health foods see: pp. 31-34. See also: Berridge, *Marketing Health*, p. 132.

to capitalise on the rising consumer interest in healthy behaviours (although only easy, supplementary behaviours rather than restrictive practices) in part formed by the contemporaneous public health mandate and the focus in consumer culture on attaining certain beauty ideals. Its focus on the individual at-risk as their identified market base allowed the company to utilise the Flora Information Service to further establish the brand as both a health product and a voice of nutritional and scientific authority. This duality allowed Unilever to adopt an innovative approach to its Flora advertising, which integrated with wider trends in food marketing concerned with selling 'natural' products.[135] Its focus on the middle-aged man, scientifically identified as most vulnerable to coronary heart disease, was a new departure in the marketing of margarine and butter products. Indeed, as the marketing of Flora continued during the following decade, this visual focus on the at-risk man would become an increasingly important centrepiece for Flora's advertising activities.

'The Margarine for Men': Masculinity, Healthy Bodies and Flora during the 1980s

The postwar period witnessed the considerable and rapid commodification of the male body. Successful male lifestyle magazines, male toiletries and a revolutionised male dress code all contributed to the idealisation of fashionable (and indeed beautiful) male bodies. Men's magazines urged men to purchase goods and services to emulate designer ideals.[136] While much historical work has focussed on the commodification

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[135] From the late 1960s, the food industry (throughout the US, Britain and Europe) utilised a rhetoric of naturalness to sell a new range of products to a new generation of consumers concerned about notions of 'You are What you Eat'. See: Levenstein, *Paradox of Plenty*, pp. 195-197. This was largely facilitated through a cross-transfer of ideas based on the multinational nature of corporate food companies.

[136] Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska, 'Living Standards and Consumption', in *A Companion to Contemporary Britain 1939-2000,* ed. by Paul Addison and Harriet Jones (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2007), pp. 238-239.

of the female body in conjunction with the development of postwar consumer culture, it has only been recently that the male body has received similar scholarly attention. Much of this recent academic work has concentrated on the rise of gay culture and the meanings of masculinity within the postwar period.[137] In particular, Frank Mort has traced male lifestyle cultures from the 1950s focussing on particular figures, such as the gentleman, the yuppie and the gay urban flâneur, and their relationship to consumer culture.[138] Similarly, Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska has examined the rise of body management regimes in the inter-war period with a particular emphasis on the rise of body fitness regimes of both men and women, reintroducing the male body into the body management narrative.[139] In providing an analytical balance in this gendered study she presented much ground-breaking work on the ways in which the state and the emergent mechanisms of a mass consumer culture were influencing how the body was 'shaped' by male and female consumers alike. She suggested that the increased presence of idealised male bodies in the mass media, taken in conjunction with the rising awareness of the health risks associated with over-eating, lack of exercise and obesity, have resulted in greater social concern about the male body.[140]

While slimming and fitness cultures were largely directed at women during the postwar period, from the 1980s these have been increasingly targeted at men through magazines, self-help books and the televisual and cinematic medias. Such developments created a general narrowing of gender differences in terms of constructing the ideal, healthy body through lifestyles and social expectations. As

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[137] For example: Frank Mort, *Cultures of Consumption. Masculinities and Social Space in Late-Twentieth Century Britain* (London: Routledge, 1996); Frank Mort, *Dangerous Sexualities: Medico-Moral Politics in England since 1830* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1987); Justin Bengry, 'Courting the Pink Pound: Men Only and the Queer Consumer, 1935-39', *History Workshop Journal* 68:1 (2009), pp. 122-148; Chris Tinker, 'Mixed Masculinities in 1960s British and French Youth Magazines', *The Journal of Popular Culture* 47:1 (2014); Alexander Doty, *Making Things Perfectly Queer: Interpreting Mass Culture* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994).

[138] Mort, *Cultures of Consumption*, pp. 149-200.

[139] Zweiniger-Bargielowska, *Managing the Body*, pp.335-337.

[140] Zweiniger-Bargielowska, 'Living Standards and Consumption', p. 239.

Yvonne Tasker argued, '[t]he visibility of the built male body, in both film and advertising images, represent[ed] part of a wider shift in the male image, and in the range of masculine identities … on offer in western popular culture'.[141] For Tasker, the male bodybuilder of the 1980s and early 1990s navigated a 'fragile tightrope' between narcissism and excess on one side and heroism and health on the other.[142] It contributed to the normalisation of images of the built male body in popular culture as a positive personal attribute associated with strength, perseverance and self-control. However, while these endeavours to create the idealised male more generally have largely failed, in terms of the rising rates of obesity in contemporary Britain, they have not prevented the tenets of beauty and the pursuit of the lifestyle-orientated healthy body from pervading consumer culture and the mass media. Thus, in terms of the development of a health advertising culture in postwar Britain, it was the perception of the healthy male rather than the sobering reality that persisted as an important marker of modernity.

To this end, following on from the perceived success of the 'Stop' advertising campaign, Unilever's marketing strategy for Flora further aligned the product with visualisations of the male body. So for its next advertising campaign the at-risk middle-aged man was replaced by the young, healthy, fit male body – the body engaged from an early stage in upholding the tenets of prevention. In this way Flora was reconstituted as not just a foodstuff high in healthier fats but as a product that had particular preventative functions. As Unilever made clear, Flora advertisements 'portrayed the goodness and benefits of the product [and] its role in the maintenance of heart health for all, but particularly men'.[143] To this end, Flora launched 'The

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[141] Yvonne Tasker, 'Spectacular Bodies: Gender, Genre and the Action Cinema' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Warwick, 1995), pp. 143-159.

[142] Tasker, 'Spectacular Bodies', pp. 161-162.

[143] Anon, 'Fats, Heart Disease and Unilever', Unilever Archives, Port Sunlight, A4 5350.

Margarine for Men' campaign in 1976. While the visual components of these advertisements suggested that male purchasers were themselves important targets for Unilever, internal memorandums revealed that a more complicated visual construction process was at work. Interestingly, it was Unilever's intention that this campaign 'target ... primarily women and show ... a man's torso'.[144] I will therefore argue that with this campaign Unilever complicated the visual language of beauty and attractiveness to sell health or healthiness through margarine. By inverting the process of the 'male gaze' and implicitly targeting women purchasers, they were confidently asserting a mode of female spectatorship ostensibly still in its infancy, at least in theoretical terms during the 1970s and 1980s.[145] Thus, this campaign utilised complex (if outwardly simplistic) visual imagery to construct masculinity and the male bodies as attractive and beautiful. In addition, it re-established the primacy of Mulvey's '*to-be-looked-at-ness*' apparent in contemporaneous governmental health campaigns within the advertising process. This '*to-be-looked-at-ness*' suggested a re-orientation of the 'male gaze' and reflected the numerous and multifaceted ways images were inflected with both implicit and explicit meanings as vehicles of change.

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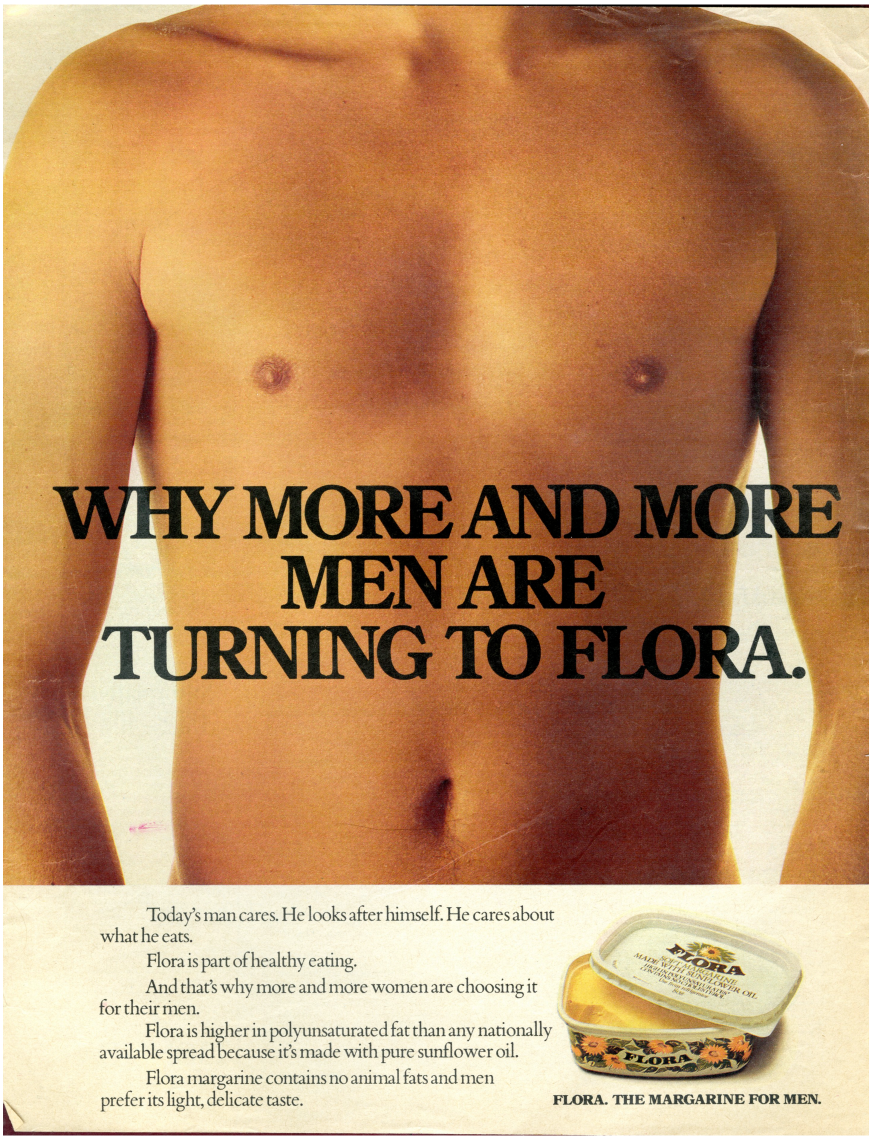
[144] Flora Brand History, Unilever Archives, Port Sunlight, un-catalogued.

[145] Psychoanalytic work and feminist criticism have used Mulvey's interpretation of the 'male gaze' to explore meanings around female spectatorship. There has, however, been a general absence of critical research on the possible homoerotic pleasures for the female spectator and the multiple variations of desire and identification caused by the gaze. For a succinct summary and an attempt to address this shortfall see: Jackie Stacey, *Star Gazing*, pp. 20-35.



Today's man cares. He looks after himself. He cares about what he eats.

Flora is part of healthy eating.

And that's why more and more women are choosing it for their men.

Flora is higher in polyunsaturated fat than any nationally available spread because it's made with pure sunflower oil.

Flora margarine contains no animal fats and men prefer its light, delicate taste.

FLORA. THE MARGARINE FOR MEN.

Figure 8: 'Why More and More Men Are Turning to Flora.' advertisement (Unilever Archives, Flora/Go Organic Box), July 1978.
Reproduced with kind permission of Unilever [from an original in Unilever Archives]

This advertising image from 'The Margarine for Men' campaign (Figure 4.8) displayed a close-up static photograph of a man's toned, tanned torso from the navel to the neck. The visual emphasis on the male chest dovetailed with the emergence of the male body as an object of mainstream consumption in fashion, cinema and advertisements.[146] Susan Bordo has examined this re-emergence of the nude male body in the mid-to-late twentieth century United States, linking it to the development

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[146] See: Bordo, *The Male Body*, p. 168.

of a ‘pure consumerism’ that recognised the marketing (and purchasing) potential of male fitness and beauty in terms of aesthetic admiration.[147] She further argued, ‘Where visual culture goes, so ordinary folks eventually follow’ because most people want to look ‘normal’ in a culture where ‘normal’ is being continually redefined by the media, cosmetic surgeons and movie stars.[148] Advertising similarly advanced culturally contingent notions of bodily beauty and the specific ways this was visible or inscribed *on* the body and therefore discernable by the viewer. In this advertisement (Figure 4.8), the flat, toned chest and stomach of the male figure in conjunction with the tanned, hair-free torso constructed notions of what healthiness ‘looked’ like and implicitly suggested that apart from eating Flora, both regular exercise and fitness were key means of achieving this ideal. Interestingly, the head of the man was cut off, existing beyond the frame of the advertisement. This visual choice was revealing. By portraying this figure of apparent objective male attractiveness (and by extension, healthiness) as faceless, personality-less, the torso itself was able to become both desirable and personal for the ‘everyman’, allowing the viewer to impose individualised meanings and desires upon the image and thus ‘fill in the blanks’.

Jackie Stacey argued that – prompted by gaps in Mulvey’s original attack on the ‘male gaze’ – female spectatorship, in conjunction with its interaction with pleasure, desire and the rise of male images within mass culture, has been a central, contested question within analyses of visual media.[149] Through a rethinking of the ‘male gaze’, the question of the female spectator has displaced the notion that there is a fixity in viewing produced by a text. This, therefore, opened images to newer, more dynamic interpretations about looking and ‘*to-be-looked-at-ness*’ within visual

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[147] Bordo, *The Male Body*, p. 168.
[148] Bordo, *The Male Body*, p. 283.
[149] Stacey, *Star Gazing*, pp. 23-24.

culture. This ‘Why more and more men are turning to Flora’ advertisement combined an image centred on the male body and the shift amongst men to eating Flora and yet, there was an apparent disconnect between the accentuated visual image and the textual support. The taut torso was identified by the advertisement itself as the primary reason ‘more and more men are turning to Flora’ but the target audience of the advertisement was women – traditional female food purchasers. While health may be one important marketing tool for Flora, the sale of a bodily ideal is equally prevalent and more so in visual terms. The beautiful male body was utilised for selling health to women, thus requiring viewers (and potential purchasers) to gaze upon the body as an encounter with the masculine, both active and healthy. If both John Berger and Laura Mulvey have argued for the primacy of the man in visual processes of meaning construction, Unilever’s targeting of women as potential purchasers was a notable departure.[150] As the accompanying text reveals, women were central, ‘And that’s why more and more women are choosing it for their men’.

If women were generally depicted in different ways to men – ‘not because the feminine is different to the masculine’ but because the ‘ideal spectator is assumed to be male and the image of the women is designed to flatter him’, were these adverts designed to flatter women?[151] Were they attempting to evoke in them the *inverted* ‘male gaze’ – notions of the pleasure for women in looking as active agents in the visual process and thereby playing with the assumptions of a new type of viewer? Berger suggested that transforming the traditional nude female into the male would violently alter both the image and the assumptions of the likely viewer. Yet, while this may hold some currency within the fine arts, advertising images such as these Flora advertisements were altering traditional notions of body representations and what they

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[150] John Berger, *Ways of Seeing* (London, Penguin Books, 1972); Mulvey, ‘Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema’, pp. 14-30.
[151] Berger, *Ways of Seeing*, p. 64.

‘said’ about the viewer and the process of looking. I would suggest that as consumer culture increasingly identified the male body as a site for constructing ideals of beauty and culturally contingent notions of the healthy body, so too did the images produced to reflect this.

As the campaign developed during the 1970s, Flora associated its margarine with the creation and maintenance of happy and content personal relationships (Figure 4.9 and Figure 4.10). Firstly, this facilitated a movement into the realm of the family, while retaining a visual commitment to depictions of the healthy male body. They continued to represent the family man and the woman shopper as the epitomes of ‘modern’ life. The committed, healthy, fit father and husband was visually coded as the essence of Flora’s health-promoting mission. For example, the ‘He’s just like his Dad’ advertisement (Figure 4.9) constructed the ‘Flora man’ as an important role model for younger male children. It suggested that by emulating his father, and including healthy Flora margarine in his diet, this young boy could assume the habits and behaviours of his father (and likewise become a ‘Flora man’).

Little boys can't wait to grow up like their dads. While dads, of course, are just little boys at heart.

With their dad's example – and a little encouragement from you – boys grow up enjoying the healthier ways of life.

They get to know about Flora margarine, too.

Flora's made with pure sunflower oil, so it's high in polyunsaturates and low in cholesterol.

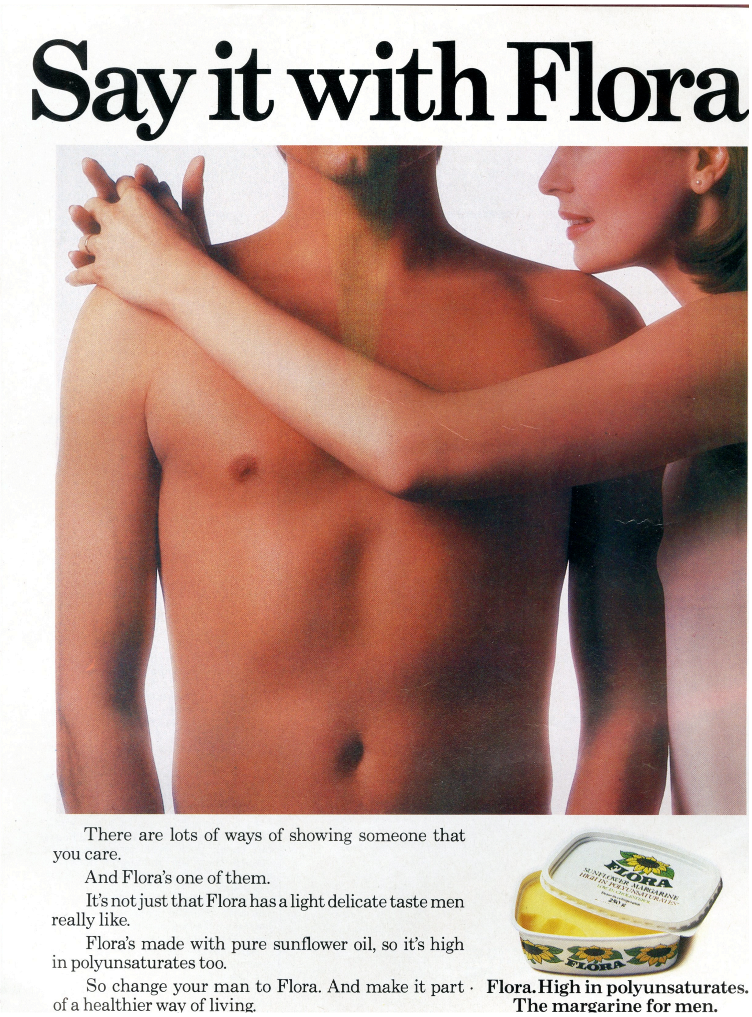
The taste is one that men – and boys – seem to like. Light and delicate.

How soon will all your men be Flora men?

Figure 4.9: 'He's just like his Dad', advertisement (The Advertising Archives, 30544849), 1979-1980.

Yet, the advertisement suggested that the opposite was also true. The phrasing suggested either that the father was responsible for bequeathing the tenets of healthy eating habits to his son or that the son should follow Dad's example by eating healthy foods chosen, bought and cooked by mum. After all the advertisement ended with the question 'How soon will all your men be Flora men?'. In this respect, the implicit educator in healthy eating behaviours was the traditional responsible mother. The construction of Flora as one part in a litany of behavioural and social elements that passed from parent to child established Flora as desirable within a very different context to the pervious Flora advertisement (Figure 4.8). The exclusion of the mechanisms of '*to-be-looked-at-ness*' in 'He's just like his Dad', was short lived. In

1981, Unilever reintroduced the voyeuristic-scopophillic ‘look’ that had been established within ‘The Margarine for Men’ campaign. However, now women were also included. To this end ‘Say it with Flora’ (Figure 4.10) for example, re-established the presence of the ‘male gaze’ once more.



There are lots of ways of showing someone that you care.

And Flora’s one of them.

It’s not just that Flora has a light delicate taste men really like.

Flora’s made with pure sunflower oil, so it’s high in polyunsaturates too.

So change your man to Flora. And make it part of a healthier way of living.

Flora. High in polyunsaturates.
The margarine for men.

Figure 4.180: ‘Say it with Flora’, Flora Advertisement (Unilever Archives, Flora/Go Organic Box), 1984. Reproduced with kind permission of Unilever [from an original in Unilever Archives]

By including the female body – the woman with her arms draped around the nude male torso – the emphasis of the look again included the female. The image was cropped at her eye-line, preventing the viewer access to an identifiable male character but her positioning emphasised the traditional caring and protective characteristics of wives (and mothers). The female shopper was still that target of the advertisement – ‘So change your man to Flora’ –, and Unilever included the woman to evoke ‘the healthy, young wife [because] if a woman buys Flora for her husband, it is because she cares about health’.[152] Implicitly, ‘read’ alongside its predecessors for Flora, the advertisement referred to ‘his’ – the man’s – ‘health’. It was her face that filled part of the frame – with the man still faceless –, and it is her bodily positioning around the man’s upper body (with angular arm and strong chin) that draws the viewer’s eye toward the attractive male body, again in the guise of protector. During a period in which Unilever were slowly moving away from male only visual images in their advertising material, it was perhaps unsurprising that the hitherto implied women shopper (who by giving their husbands Flora, transformed them into ‘Flora men’) re-emerged within the images of the brand. By 1986 ‘The margarine for men’ tag-line in the advertisements was altered to ‘The margarine for you’ recognising not only the place of women within the Flora brand success, but also that women themselves were increasingly being identified as at-risk from coronary heart disease.[153] In this scenario, explicit gendering would negatively impact on the brand’s success. Rather, Unilever returned to older, more traditional forms of margarine advertising centred on ‘captur[ing] a genuine maternal/caring spirit with which mothers could identify’ and in doing so constructed Flora as a margarine brand for the whole family rather than ‘at risk’ men alone.[154]

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[152] Anon, Flora UK Product History, Unpublished, Unilever Archives, Port Sunlight.

[153] As Unilever made clear within an internal memo: ‘This change acknowledged the fact that it was not just men who were at risk from heart disease – women were just as vulnerable – and recognised the fact that the success of ‘The Margarine for Men’ campaign had widened brand usage. See: Anon, Flora UK Product History, Unpublished, Unilever Archives, Port Sunlight.

[154] Anon, Flora UK Product History, Unpublished, Unilever Archives, Port Sunlight.

Conclusion

Throughout the postwar period, commercial marketing activities have played an important and often overlooked role in disseminating health information. This chapter has argued for their inclusion in the historical narrative as important artefacts that could educate the British public about health risks. I have focussed on the case of diet, using Unilever's Flora brand as an innovative and new mode of health education based on health claims, added value and educative marketing. In doing so, I examined a number of visual advertisements and demonstrated how Flora margarine constructed gender norms, the body and healthy lifestyles as the essence of what it meant to be 'modern' during the postwar period. While their ultimate aim was to sell margarine, I argue that Unilever's Flora also sold food as a modern medicine as a preventative product aimed at reducing disease risk. As medical science increasingly identified saturated fats as having an adverse effect on the likelihood of developing coronary heart disease, Unilever seized on social responses by engaging at-risk individuals as key agents of behavioural change. In doing so they enlisted the ideology of the 'new public health' to commodify the beautiful, fit and healthy body.

By providing an alternative view of health education dissemination, which dovetailed with, but was not centred on contemporaneous governmental initiatives, I suggest that there was a distinct continuity between state-led efforts and the commercial approaches of multinational corporations such as Unilever. While their motives for disseminating this information may have been very different to that of central and local government, their content, form and approach displayed an important visual and graphic heritage that spanned both forms of promotion. In this way, the development of health education in Britain pertaining to food and heart health was more complex and layered than is often understood, creating an important visual aesthetic which I argue constructed food as a modern medicine for chronic disease.

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Conclusion

This thesis has argued for the role of images as ‘vehicles of mass communication’ in promoting information about diet and health to the British public since the Second World War. It has suggested that visual representations provide important, and often under-examined sources, for how gender, the body, individualism and consumer culture were all impacting on understandings of diet and disease. Rather than a top down process, health education was diverse and multilateral with multinational companies such as Unilever P.L.C. forming important ancillary roles in transmitting health advice to the consumer. The competing visual and textual representations of disease, diet and the body constructed through forms of marketing health education in mid-to-late century Britain, as feminine or masculine, traditional or modern, preventive or curative, complicate the chronological narrative of wartime and postwar public health policy. I have suggested that these images, and their textual elements, while not uniform, simple or easy to ‘read’ perform important functions beyond their intended use – referencing gender norms, the primacy of the body and the enduring focus on modernity and the ‘modern’ in ‘selling’ health and new lifestyles.

The mid-twentieth century in Britain witnessed the emergence of new health risks that were often coded in relation to food, diet and the healthy body. Both government and the food industry contributed to the construction that individualised health risks could be overcome (at least in part) by complying with a myriad of health advice that emphasised personal responsibility and behavioural change as key components of the ‘new public health’ agenda. This shift connected health with consumption, and health advice with modes of communication closely associated to consumer culture and visual advertising. By analysing the specific elements of visual imagery used to promote new eating and health behaviours, I have emphasised the use of rhetorical strategies – often focused on gender and the body –, which contributed to and reflected tentative understandings of risk factors for chronic disease and how these interacted with existing social norms regarding eating, shopping and food technologies.

In doing so these images communicated the legitimacy of the emergent public health agenda focused on individualism and behaviour change, as well as the primacy of looking and '*to-be-looked-at-ness*' in the contemporary consumer culture. The repeated emphasis on aspiration, desire and pleasure stimulated by looking (and perhaps adhering to health advice) revealed that images too, contributed to widespread understandings of food and its interaction with health and disease. I have argued that they played an essential role in this process, not as mere illustrations to a textual, documentary point, but as vehicles of mass communication centred on well-being, health and pleasure.

Modes of Looking

This thesis has provided one way in which images can be incorporated into historical research in productive ways. I have emphasised that visual representations provide alternative avenues for understanding how disease, and particularly heart disease, was being conceptualised in terms of diet. Barbara Duden, in her influential work *Disembodying Women: Perspectives on Pregnancy and the Unborn*, considered the varying scientific techniques used to 'flay' the female body and turn it inside out to expose the visible body.[1] Lisa Cartwright developed this visible body further, exploring the 'optical dissection and penetration of the human body' in reconfiguring 'life'.[2] Cartwright focused on motion pictures as an apparatus for monitoring and regulating within medical science, emphasising the role of X-ray, the microscope and the kymograph amongst other medical objects in creating a modernist mode of scientific and medical representation. Her work, limited to one particular mode of viewing – the cinema – explored technologies of viewing and examined its attempts to reconfigure the 'transient and uncontrollable field of the body'.[3] In similar ways, health education in Britain also used images to establish power over bodies engaged in individualised and personalised unhealthy behaviours. Whereas medical technologies (and the related need for specialist technologists) involved visualising disease in biological, pathological and often internalised ways, the use of persuasive images that focused on the exteriority of the body and its associations with pleasure were equally innovative ways of imagining the healthy body in opposition to the unhealthy, diseased body. I argued that this process still required an internalisation, but rather than one which sought to view the internal mechanisms of the body, these images utilised an internalised gaze that forced viewers to compare themselves to cultural norms regarding body image and how that reflected healthiness. Furthermore, the intersection between the medical or clinical gaze of Cartwright's work (which she promotes as a 'healthy gaze'), the 'male gaze', and later the female gaze borrowed from film studies and feminist scholarship used in this thesis, demonstrated the ways in which varying interpretations of the gaze overlapped in the primacy of gender to

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[1] Barbara Duden, *Disembodying Women: Perspectives on Pregnancy and the Unborn* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1992). Lisa Cartwright also briefly discusses Duden's work in relation to the ascendancy of the term 'life'. Lisa Cartwright, *Screening the Body: Tracing Medicine's Visual Culture* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995), p. xi.

[2] Cartwright, *Screening the Body*.

[3] Cartwright, *Screening the Body*, p. xiii.

modes of looking in promoting public knowledge about bodies in the twentieth century.

This thesis has used the methodology of visual culture to argue that images played important roles in creating and communicating knowledge about diet and health to a population level audience in Britain during the mid to late twentieth century. Taking as a distant inspiration both the work of Susan Sontag on the poster and John Berger's *Ways of Seeing* as models for examining images and their meanings across disciplinary boundaries – linking history with other fields including art history, cultural studies, feminist studies and film studies –, I have emphasised the cross-fertilisation of ideas about images, but grounded these within specific examples.[4] Berger's work was particularly influential in merging a variety of theory, including the concept of mechanical reproduction and Marxist theory, to facilitate the examination of images from both the history of art and advertising. I have similarly adopted an approach to the visual that has allowed often overlooked forms of visual communication – public information campaigning and product advertising – to be foregrounded within historical understandings of health education in wartime and postwar Britain.

I argued that wartime propaganda campaigns utilised gender norms and motherhood as ways of informing citizens about how to engage in healthy eating in a time of significant food shortage. I used these propaganda images to reassess the ideas of communalism through the lens of individualism. While individualism in terms of health and disease has generally been historicised in terms of its postwar proliferation, itself closely linked to the rise of chronic disease epidemiology, this chapter suggested that the individual was an important actor within the wartime rhetoric around food. In

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[4] Susan Sontag, 'Posters: advertisement, art, political artifact, commodity' in *Looking Closer: Critical Writings on Graphic Design*, ed. by Michael Bierut (New York: Allworth Press, 1999), pp. 196-218; John Berger, *Ways of Seeing* (London: BBC and Penguin Books, 1972).

this way visual representations contribute to understanding the wartime period not as one of departure but as a time when the individual was being identified and contacted through visual propaganda campaigns in ways not so dissimilar to chronic disease campaigns in the postwar era. Similarly, those visual representations focused on diet and disease have repeatedly and continuously relied on propagating contemporaneous gender norms and the role of the wife and mother as responsible for her family's health throughout the mid-late twentieth century. Modernity, class and the merits of consumerism also formed important visual foci in many governmental campaigns and commercial advertising. Yet, it was through the continuous focus on gender difference and later the '*to-be-looked-at-ness*' of the body, that disease risk was firmly attached to concerns about personal attractiveness, body image and a body management culture centred on fitness. Through close analysis of these visual representations, I exposed the differing implications these images had for men and women in terms of disease prevention and risk avoidance. Visual representations used to 'sell' health as the personal objective of 'modern' life – whether governmental or commercial – contributed to the construction of bodies as agents of change in terms of disease prevention.

The purpose of this thesis has been to analyse the emergence of a discourse about diet, healthiness and beauty through their construction within forms of health education produced by both central government and Unilever. I have focused on particular visual examples, themselves illustrative of an extensive wealth of visual material produced for disseminating information about health. Food and diet underwent marked changes during the period under consideration and individualism and lifestyle were consequently reconceptualised in terms of disease. By employing the analytic lens of visual representation, I explored the complexities of understanding that accompanied this re-conceptualisation, in tandem with the shift from infectious disease to chronic disease as prime concerns for public health policy. In doing so, my thesis contributes to the wide extant literature on the historicising of disease but links this to a sophisticated advertising culture itself concerned with the processes of visualising potential consumers (and consumer desires). The myriad ways disease (and healthiness) were visualised revealed much about how chronic disease was contemporaneously understood. I have argued that these images contained meanings beyond the confines of epistemological value, operating within a socio-cultural context that emphasised traditional gender roles, the primacy of the beautiful body and the broader rise of a low-fat ideology in consumerist Britain.

As Marita Sturken and Lisa Cartwright suggested, there were many gazes participating in the 'visual culture of modernity … [and] new ways of consuming were linked to new ways of looking'.[5] I have emphasised how new ways of eating, as part of this wartime and postwar consumerism, similarly produced new ways of looking and understanding what is being viewed. Therefore, interpretations of images cannot be singular, detached processes but instead are linked to a wider set of factors and preconditions. Health imagery is a particularly noteworthy case because a presumed objectivity often accompanied it, alongside the authority of science, government or the law. Yet, I have emphasised that healthy ways of 'looking' were culturally dependent and constitutive of experience because ways of looking in terms of health, science and medicine were not constructed in isolation from wider cultural contexts. The role of images within health education as evidence for the benefits of particular health behaviours has a complex genealogy closely linked to the widespread proliferation of public information material during the Second World

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[5] Marita Sturken and Lisa Cartwright, *Practices of Looking: An Introduction to Visual Culture* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 196.

War. Within the context of total war, images as a means of representing knowledge were important features of the wartime propaganda machine. Yet the posters, pamphlets, film and television programmes produced both during the war and afterwards were contemporaneously understood as constructed, idealised and certainly not 'windows onto reality'. Instead, they fulfilled a function closely related to the contemporary consumer advertisement which presented things to be desired and people to be envied. Within the context of health education, this play on aspiration was time and again used to either support or negate images.

Through a close reading of health images as they relate to food and diet from the period of rationing to the rise of the single-issue health campaign directed at disseminating the risk factors for heart disease, this thesis has exposed the intersection between gender, beauty, modernity and consumer culture in 'selling' health as a preventive medicine. Through the methodology of visual culture, I emphasised implicit and explicit messages about health, the body and individual responsibilities as displayed through imagistic health campaigns. I have historicised and problematised these images, stressing the repeated inclusion of the gendered body and culturally contingent understandings of body image to teach the public about food, diet and health. These images employed particular visual messages, often focused on the '*to-be-looked-at-ness*' of both the female and male body in relation to the gaze. Throughout this thesis, I have explored these recurrent themes and linked them to wider developments in public health as it related to disease. In particular the role of the individual and the importance of lifestyle and behaviour change to disease diminution formed important components of public health education at a time when chronic diseases, especially heart disease, were amongst the biggest killers in a 'modern' Britain.

Gender Roles and Body Histories

As part of this wider visual examination, this thesis has elevated the position of gender and body history to the postwar chronic disease narrative. It is through a focus on the history of gender and the body that I have contextualised these images, emphasising how they construct and code healthy eating in terms of traditional gender roles. Linear narratives of progress for women are inadequate in historicising the past and their role within society. The shift towards gender history over the last four decades has emphasised centring women within general histories, which in turn has emphasised an understanding of gender in relation to the body.[6] Studies on the history of women in the Second World War emphasised the role of women within the story of austerity not only because they were responsible for enacting governmental food policy within individualised, daily contexts, but also because their responses were complex and long-lasting.[7] As I have shown in Chapters Two and Three in particular, women's gendered societal roles were often implicitly coded with visual health campaigning, highlighting both accepted normative behaviours for women, while also continually re-establishing women's natural place within the home. The need for female conscription during the war complicated gendered labour roles, but as I have displayed the visual propaganda continued to reinforce traditional feminine norms such as cooking, shopping and looking 'beautiful'.

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[6] For example: Amanda Vickery, 'Golden Age to Separate Spheres? A Review of Categories and Chronology of English Women's History', *The Historical Journal* 36:2 (1993), pp. 383-414. Anna Davin, 'Feminsim and Labour History' in Raphael Samuel, *People's History and Socialist Theory* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1981), pp. 176-181; Billie Melman, 'Changing the Subject: Women's History and Historiography, 1900-2000', in *Women in Twentieth-Century Britain*, ed. by Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska (Harlow: Pearson Education, 2001), pp. 16-34. Theodore Koditscheck, 'The Gendering of the British Working Class', *Gender and History* 9:2 (1997), pp. 333-357.

[7] Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska, *Austerity in Britain: Rationing, Controls, and Consumption, 1939-1955* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); Sonya O. Rose, *Which People's War? National Identity and Citizenship in Britain 1939-1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003); Lucy Noakes, *War and the British: Gender, Memory and National Identity* (London: I.B. Tauris, 1998); Penny Summerfield, *Reconstructing Women's Wartime Lives: Discourse and Subjectivity in Oral History* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998).

Certainly, wartime initiatives were concentrated on efforts to increase food production, persuade consumers to eat new (and often unpopular) foods and reinforce the societally accepted idea that women were the natural and accepted organiser of grocery shopping, meal planning and cooking. I have shown how these wartime public information campaigns combined the dual agenda of making food control a workable governmental policy in part by making women responsible for its enactment within the home, and how in efforts to protect the unity and consistency of the 'nation' the government further established the primacy of gender difference. By making the home visible through intervention in the form of rationing and propaganda, the wartime food agenda was pivotal in creating a widespread acceptance of governmental advice on a variety of personal behaviours. Through a close analysis of the images produced by government to impact eating habits in Britain, I have argued that a variety of posters, leaflets and pamphlets often utilised perceived gender norms as a way of informing citizens about how to engage in healthy eating during a time of severe food shortage.

Yet the use of gender as an object of food advertising did not disappear with the end of war in 1945 and the lifting of food rationing in 1954. Rather, mothers and children, in particular, remained important components of the governmental nutrition policy and thus subjects of health education. Chapter Two adopted a dual approach to examining the development of postwar models of health education about food and health. The food industry was an important agent in circulating ideas about food and health, especially in relation to modernity. Unilever's branded margarine products, Blue Band and Stork, in particular, were innovative in their approach to selling food as new, modern and implicitly healthy. Their visual advertising campaigns revealed the continued focus on women within the domestic environment. They linked gender to modernity, not in terms of female emancipation or new gender-neutral roles outside the home, but in terms of technology and new types of domestic appliances. Their advertisements emphasised new kitchen and home appliances as the epitome of modernity for women in postwar Britain, tying it to traditional female roles. Thus, the 1950s and early 1960s witnessed a visual coherency in terms of gender and the body, closely linking a rhetoric around diet and heath that emphasised gender as a mode of selling.

Until recently gender history has disproportionally focused on women to the marginalisation of men.[8] In an attempt to move beyond the 'separate spheres' distinction often employed within gender histories, Chapters Three and Four have argued that in terms of the visualisation of the body, both gendered femininities and gendered masculinities were constructed as tools of health education, especially for chronic disease. This approach has been more difficult to apply to Chapters One and Two because of the repeated visual emphasis on child health and maternal responsibility, especially when governmental nutritional concerns remained centred on deficiency. Traditional female roles as wives and mothers remained dominant visual tropes throughout the mid-late twentieth century, emphasising a coherency in the visualisation of women within health advertising, especially for food. Social theorists and feminists in particular have elevated the role of coercive disciplinary power in establishing body norms, and particularly the beautiful body, as modern, desirable and a key marker of success.[9] While these studies have often focused on the ways in which images extended and reinforced the social pressures placed on women

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[8] Vickery, 'Golden Age to Separate Spheres?', pp. 383-414.

[9] In particular, Mike Featherstone, 'The Body in Consumer Culture', *Theory, Culture, Society* 1 (1982), pp. 18-13 and Susan Bordo, *Unbearable Weight: Feminism, Western Culture and the Body* (Berkeley and London: University of California Press, 1993), have been particularly informative.

to achieve unrealistic body 'norms' and the negative impact of patriarchy on women's bodies, the history of the body in relational terms has remained largely absent.

I have argued that as the postwar period progressed, it became increasingly untenable for men to remain beyond the touch of the 'gaze'. In particular, since the 1980s, consumer culture – especially within the confines of male magazines and the film industry – has circulated images centred on the muscular, athletic and toned male body as an aesthetic symbol of masculine beauty. These images, directed at men, renegotiated the visual relationship between men and women as the object of the 'gaze' in 'selling' new eating and wider lifestyle habits. The theoretical concept of the male gaze has been complicated by the wider recognition that men and male bodies were also subject to a 'gaze' through forms of female spectatorship. As Chapter Four has argued, men's bodies were increasingly objects of looking and '*to-be-looked-at-ness*' in the marketing of 'modern' lifestyles.

Contemporary Health Education: Diet, Disease and the Marketing of Health

Although this thesis draws to a close in the early 1990s, this was by no means the end of either health education campaigning focused on food or the uncertainties and contestations about diet and disease risk that slowed governmental policy throughout the 1970s and 1980s.[10] On the contrary, discussions about healthy eating, the national diet and its impact on disease have continued unabated as important areas of contention amongst scientists, nutritionists and policy-makers alike. Saturated fat has time and again been identified as a possible risk factor, and yet regularly opposing

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[10] This thesis ends in the early 1990s when the 'Look After Your Heart' campaign ended and the *Health of the Nation* White Paper (1991) was published which together marked a shift towards a wider campaigning initiative that included multi-causal risk factors for chronic disease more generally.

scientific studies have undermined its role in heart disease and diabetes in particular.[11] This continued lack of consensus on the role food, and particularly saturated fats content, might play in chronic disease causation has slowed governmental responses in terms of public health policy and health education campaigns aimed at heart disease specifically. Instead, the government has constructed a rhetoric around 'a balanced diet', with diet and lifestyle advice included under wider programmes such as the '5 A Day' initiative, the Balance of Good Health, the Eatwell Plate scheme, 'Change 4 Life' and 'Start 4 Life'.[12] Therefore, increasingly, single-issue campaigns have been superseded by general health campaigns focussed on healthy lifestyles that incorporate numerous elements – healthy eating, exercise, reduced alcohol consumption – for engaging in disease-avoidance behaviour. Similarly, the commercial food industry has come to play a supporting role within governmental health education initiatives and in particular 'Change 4 Life' works with national partners including Kellogg's and Danone to help the campaign reach far more people than would otherwise be possible.

This shift is not to underestimate the change in the public health ideology that has occurred since the 1950s and allowed the governmental promotion of healthy individual lifestyles to receive a national platform for public dissemination. Yet the launch of wider 'better health' programmes has ensured that the role of images within

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[11] A small selection of articles on various links between diet and disease from 2014 alone include: 'Saturated fat is not good for your heart but eating a balanced diet is', *The Guardian*, 25 March 2014; 'Eating too much saturated fat is still bad for you' *The Guardian*, 30 March 2014; 'Experts have been feeding us a big fat myth', *The Times*, 30 June 2014; 'The full fat diet – why it's not actually as unhealthy as you think', *The Times*, 22 July 2014; 'The Science of saturated fat: A big fat surprise about nutrition? *The Independent*, 26 August 2014; 'How butter and cheese can keep you slim – and even ward off diabetes' *Daily Mail,* 22 September 2014; 'Studies saying fat is not that bad are misleading, scientists say', *The Guardian*, 7 October 2014. All the articles are available from newspaper's websites [accessed on 22 November 2014].

[12] The ' 5 A Day' initiative was launched in Britain over the winter of 2002-2003 following World Health Organisation guidelines about increasing fruit and vegetable consumption at population level. The Balance of Good Health was launched in 1994 and replaced by the Eatwell Plate in 2007, Change 4 Life was launched in 2009 and Start for Life a year later.

the health education process has similarly changed. There has been a move away from the human element in diet and health campaigning with nutrition charts, the food pyramid and traffic light systems of food labelling all functioning as important non-human visual material, themselves rather different from their predecessors.

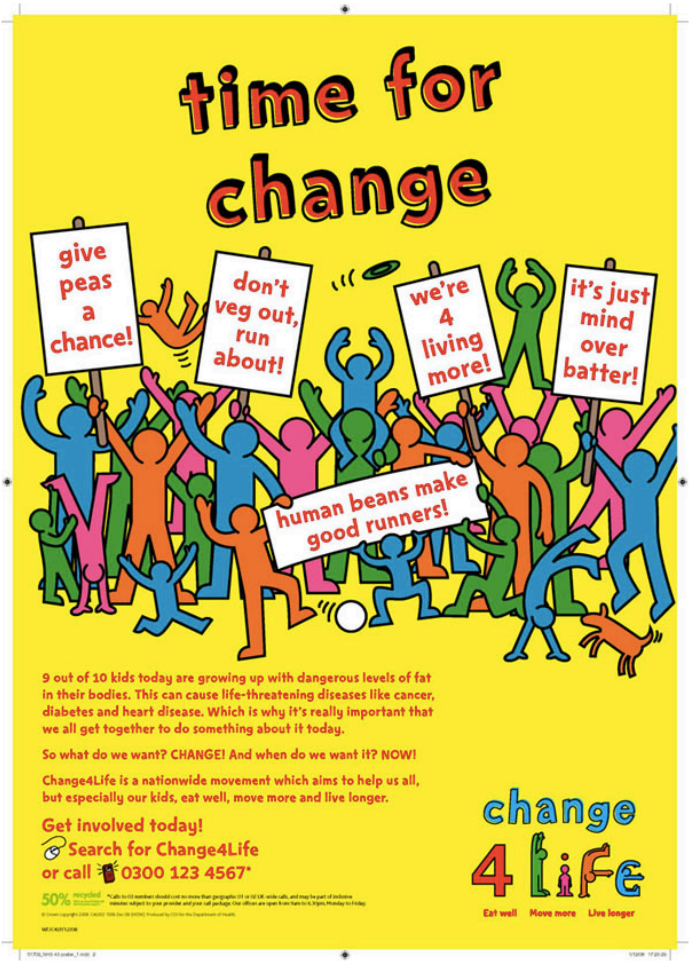
Reproduced with the kind permission of the Food Standards Agency

Figure 5.19: The Balance of Good Health (Department of Health, 1994)

Figure 5.2: The eatwell plate (Department of Health, 2007)

While these food charts (Figure 5.1 and 5.2) have a more direct visual lineage with their wartime and postwar counterparts, focusing on a variety of individual foods to create a balanced diet, the use of those photographic images which centred on the nude or semi-nude body (For example: Figures 3.1 and 3.2) have been increasingly replaced by more abstract 'unrealistic' representations of the body.

In particular, cartoonish images have also been incorporated into governmental health campaigns, perhaps as a way of overcoming increasingly topical issues around race, sexual orientation and the changing position of women within political and social life. While the beginnings of this trend were visible in some campaigning leaflet material produced for the 'Look After Your Heart' campaign during the late 1980s, the complete removal of identifiable features in the ‘Change 4 Life’ campaign is noteworthy (Figure 5.3).[13]



9 out of 10 kids today are growing up with dangerous levels of fat in their bodies. This can cause life-threatening diseases like cancer, diabetes and heart disease. Which is why it's really important that we all get together to do something about it today.

So what do we want? CHANGE! And when do we want it? NOW!

Change4Life is a nationwide movement which aims to help us all, but especially our kids, eat well, move more and live longer.

Get involved today!
Search for Change4Life
or call 0300 123 4567*

Figure 5.3: ‘Time for Change’ Poster, Change 4 Life campaign (Sarah Wood for the Central Office of Information, available from http://www.sazzlewood.com/projects/coi-change4life-launch-posters) 2009.

The use of bright colours (reminiscent of wartime poster infant and maternal health campaigns) in this contemporary campaign utilises very different visual techniques. It renders the human body more akin to that of a ‘jelly baby’ than recognisable bodies engaged in either positive or negative health behaviours, removing facial features in favour of a ‘blank canvas’ style of representation. Notably, the copywriter Sarah

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[13] For example: Health Education Council, *Look After Yourself!: A simple guide to exercise & diet* (undated).

Wood identified 'the language and editorial style of women's magazines' as key visual formulae that the campaign adopted in order to instigate behavioural change on the part of the viewer.[14] Yet the iconography and colour scheme seems to have less in common with glossy female magazine culture (themselves committed to photographic imagery) and more with that imagery associated with marketing products to children, perhaps indicative of this campaign's emphasis on the family.[15]

In public health terms obesity, and particularly childhood obesity has become an increasing problem within twenty-first century Britain.[16] The focus of 'Change 4 Life' on the family is therefore perhaps unsurprising, as central government (often through the mechanisms of the NHS) attempts to educate parents in responsible eating practices for both themselves and their children.[17] Yet this commitment to equipping the public with the necessary dietary and exercise knowledge to reduce obesity has been accompanied by a rise in general interest in naturalness in food and diet products. 'Natural' fats such as coconut oil, cashew butter and pumpkin seed butter along with so-called 'superfoods', – blueberries, pomegranates and kale – have been identified for their healthy attributes and have gained much media attention in the last decade.[18] Similarly, vegetarian and vegan diets have been repeatedly extolled for their

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[14] Sarah Wood, 'COI, Change 4 Life launch posters', available at: http://www.sazzlewood.com/projects/coi-change4life-launch-posters/ [accessed 2 December 2014].

[15] Charlene Elliott, 'Marketing Fun Foods: A Profile and Analysis of Supermarket Food Messages Targeted at Children', *Canadian Public Policy* 34:2 (2008), pp. 259-273.

[16] The 'Reducing obesity and improving diet' government policy document was published by the Ministry of Health in March 2013. It puts childhood obesity at 23% and aims by 2020 to see a 'sustained downward trend in the level of excess weight in children'. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/reducing-obesity-and-improving-diet [accessed 16 December 2014]. Similarly the 2011 Government White Paper, *Healthy Lives, Healthy People: A Call to Action on Obesity in England* (London: HMSO, 2011) set out plans for engaging all of society in reducing obesity and stating that a range of partners including government and business are responsible for helping people to lose weight and that dealing with obesity in children is essential.

[17] Change 4 Life is operated in part through the NHS and its functions as a 'local supporter' for the campaign.

[18] For example: 'Does coconut oil live up to its superfood hype?' *The Independent*, 1 December 2014; 'Coconut oil could help fight ageing? High fat diet could halt Alzheimer's and Parkinson's, study finds', *Daily Mail*, 24 November 2014; 'The Myth of the 'Superfood'', *The Telegraph*, 13 October 2014; 'From whey protein to spirulina: are superfood powders set to be as popular as the Paleo diet',

health benefits and the additional longevity they can potentially secure.[19] In this way, food and its relationship with health remains topical in contemporary Britain as government, the food industry and wider health cultures (television, magazines, the internet) have promoted the understanding that what we eat may in some way effect health outcomes.

As this thesis has shown, this development has a complex history stemming from the period of food rationing during the war and its dissemination has been widely connected with visual representations of gender, the body and the meaning of modernity in postwar Britain. Certainly, consumer culture played an important part in imagining and advancing an idealised and 'modern' Britain that was closely linked to the rise of stylised images of the body as a marketing tool. Images were very important in creating an aestheticisation of lifestyle and the body as aspirational for all. By focusing on diet and its links with chronic disease risk during the second half of the twentieth century I have linked historical approaches to advertising and the propagation of health advice to their contemporary and shifting cultural contexts, so important to understanding the implicit and explicit meanings coded in images. Moreover, I have provided a rigorous assessment of how particular images and languages were used in health campaigns and advertising to emphasise the development of self-care practices and risk-avoidance tactics within the 'new public health' of the postwar period.

The Telegraph, 14 September 2014; 'Quinoa, chia seeds and kale: superfoods or supermarketing? *The Guardian*, 2 October 2014.

[19] 'No Meat, no diary, no problem: is 2014 the year vegan becomes mainstream?', *The Independent*, 31 December 2014; 'Veggie v Carnivore: who's the healthiest?', *The Times*, 16 August 2014; 'Adopting a vegan diet will improve our health – and the planet's', *The Guardian*, 14 September 2010; 'Vegetarians less likely to develop cancer than meat eaters, says study', *The Guardian*, 1 July 2009; 'Ten reasons to go veggie', *The Times*, 20 May 2008; 'A vegetarian may be less likely to develop heart disease but there's no guarantee', *The Times*, 24 January 2007.

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